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CHRISTMAS EVE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY EDITH BOUTELLE.

There's a strange mystical glow
Filling the slumberous night,
Born of the snow, and brooding low
Under the broader light
Of centuried planets' myriad eyes,
Lighting the face of the lower skies.

Over the face of earth
Passes a magical change,
Deepens and glows, whitens the snows,
Sweeps in a boundless range;
No eye to see, and no tongue to tell,
The children of mortals slumber well.

And all throughout the night,
The veil of the sky is rent,
And in the sheen, faces are seen,
Angel and penitent,
Seraph and saint, through the golden bars
That compass the world above the stars.

Down the dim isles of light,
Through vistas of shaded glory,
Shine the blessed faces in holy places,
Cherub and prophet hoary;
And down the calm, from the distance dim,
Come sound of psalm, and voice of hymn.

WERTZAL THE SCOUT;

OR,

The Phantom of the Black Hills.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESCUE.

What did the scout behold close by the opening of the lodge? A head of yellow, curly hair, and the form of a white female captive.

To say that Wertzal was aghast at his own thoughts, would but imperfectly convey his feelings, for his ideas instantly centered upon one point, rescue; and how could the thought be entertained for a moment, with such odds against him? And Vance—on which side was he? How could he hope to find and communicate with him, and effect his purpose undiscovered? Of all the enterprises ever undertaken by himself in his palmiest days, this loomed uppermost as the most hopeless one of all.

The difficulty of apprising the woman of their vicinity, and of accomplishing anything without instant betrayal of their purpose to the camp seemed insurmountable.

Yet while all this was going through his mind, he was slowly working his way back from the lodges. At a suitable distance he could but wait for Vance to come up. Should he continue the search, he might have to circle several times around the camp, while Captain Dave might as diligently be pursuing without overtaking him.

It was not long before Wertzal was joined by his companion, who had, as the old scout supposed, reconnoitered from another quarter of the encampment and had failed to discover the captive.

A hurried consultation followed.

"If we could get her away to the place where my horse is tethered, we might escape," remarked Vance.

"But the pinch is to get her away—how on airth ar' we agwine to wake her up without startin' a hornet's neest among the whole camp ov pitch-wigs? Leastwise, I'm thinkin' to try it. It's my plan to git the gal out to you, an' then, from sum other quarter to draw the devils off while you get clear, if ye can. If ye start, Dave, don't yer ever giv' her up. Hold on to her till she's killed—cause she'd bless ye in dyin' for enny manner of death that would free her from them ar unsavory varmints."

Captain Dave advanced to the location pointed out by Wertzal, signifying to the old veteran that he understood directions. The scout then moved away. As he neared the encampment he felt himself becoming extremely excited and he was obliged to pause some moments to gain control of his nerves.

His trembling arose wholly from a realizing sense of the difficulty of apprising the captive of the nearness of friends without also bringing the red-skins to a sense of the same fact.

Creeping cautiously, scarcely daring to breathe, with his "interpreter" ready to speak at an instant's notice, Wertzal soon found himself in his old situation, close to the captive's lodge.

The wind was freshening somewhat, giving something of a rustle to the foliage of the shrubs and bushes. The scout noiselessly sank upon his knees, and taking out his knife, carefully cut off a small branch from a tree near by. Again he hesitated, still distressed by the knowledge that every passing moment increased the danger. In an instant he saw that the twig would not reach her face, nor hands, without exposing his arm to any chance glance of an opening, savage eye. While he still held his position in doubt as his next movement, the captive softly arose upon her elbow and peered eagerly into the waving bush. The camp-fire which had died down to a few red embers, showed her almost noiseless movement.

By that law little known and less understood, she had felt the presence of something foreign to the hour and place. As she gazed and listened intently, the scout thrust forth the branch in his hand and made a beckoning movement, but it was quite impossible to guess whether the signal was understood, the light being dim and imperfect; and some noise arising in close proximity, caused her to instantly resume her recumbent position.

One, two, five minutes passed, and she did not again rise, so that Wertzal began to feel sure that her previous position had been assumed accidentally, or was the result of some sleeping fancy. Just then, however, she again arose upon her elbow, and the wind rushing past once more disturbed the embers and faintly lighted up the scene.

EMILY OVERHEARS THE PLOTTING OF THE RUFFIANS BELOW.

Feeling confident that all eyes but hers were closed, the scout thrust forth his hand and beckoned her to arise. She shook her hand, and pointed toward the lodges which were beyond her scope of vision.

He signified by movements that the captors all slept, and again beckoned her—this time, as if impatiently. Then the old scout withdrew his arm into the shadow, got stiffly on his feet, and bending down waited the next movement. The perspiration streamed from every pore as he watched the brave woman rise noiselessly to her feet, and stooping in the low opening of the lodge, prepare to step over the brawny legs of a sleeping savage.

"God!" fervently ejaculated the old hero, "the least stumble, a sneeze, the crack of a jint, will on-do it all, and make it a pesky sight harder to get hearin agin—leastwise, she'll be bound as tight as an unruly cur. She's out—no, what's up? See that 'ar maddenin hesitation, almost atop ov them ar buckskin legs. What's that ar pan-toe-mine signerfy?"

The woman's left arm was making first an up and down, then a sawing, jerking motion.

"By all the saints in the cullender, she's united to that fox—leastwise, her wrist is tied by a rope to his wrist. Powers of Heaven! what's ter be dun—I mighter knowed. I can't advance—I can't show myself, an my knife, if I throw it, might tunk his shins—leastwise, twould bring up with a cluck sumwhar. And what's ter be dun? Her hand still works them ar higher-row-giffics in the air, and she means—tose a knife. I will, but—it's risky—she's in an uncommon risky persition. If she don't ketch the knife it's gwine to *tunk*."

She ceased her movements and extended her left, unencumbered hand, and Wertzel, with a rough aspiration for aid, tossed the knife. She caught it between the fingers of her outstretched hand, and bringing the back of the blade to her teeth, slowly drew it open. She then had to change her position, so as to seize the tough string of hide beyond the wrist with her teeth, lest when it was severed, the falling end might awaken her foe. Her bonds at last were broken, and she laid the thong beside her captor, with all the speed consistent with extreme caution; and then changing the sharp, open knife to the right hand, she moved outside. Her moccasined feet gave no sound as she lightly trod the distance between the lodge and the brush, and here Wertzal silently grasped her hand, and they both, with the greatest caution, moved away.

Were they to escape without discovery? Was there to be an especial Providence in their case? No—hark! First a yelp, and then a whoop. Wertzal caught the slight form of his companion to his breast and bounded away. At the distance of a hundred yards he came upon Captain Vance, who, holding the black mare by the nostrils, was ready for instant action.

"Take her, Dave," panted the old scout, "an' if them ar lice overtake you, don't let her go alive. Leastwise I'm gwine to get 'em off the scent if I kon."

Captain Vance's mare, unmindful of her double burden, dashed away to the east like an antelope, while the scout, bringing his muscular system into condition to make some tall leaps, swept to the west of north, first pausing an instant to discharge his rifle. Quirky, who although in the background was never beyond hearing of his master's ear-splitting whistle, started up a terrible yelping due north of the camp, and then striking a 2.40 pace for no mewhere, took care that his dog's skin should lose itself in the night outside.

But the Indian is crafty. He understands stratagems and false movements pretty well himself, and as there had been sounds on two sides of the camp, several braves dashed off in different directions. Unfortunately for our fugitives, the Indians had fresh horses and the starlight was uncomfortably bright. Wertzal, finding himself hard pressed, tore away toward a stream that brawled through a ravine to the west.

"It's my only chance ov salvation," muttered the scout; "they'll scrummage about till daylight, the fust streaks ov which ain't more'n two or three hours ahind this time, and then they'll git the trail. Saints! that bug's treadin' up clus, an' in about ten minits will be so near that even the pipin' of the tode won't insure length ov days ter old Wertzal. There's the mounting stream. I'll serve them ear-wigs a *foul* trick—leastwise duck."

With two or three more heavy, long leaps, the scout was on the bank, and without an instant's hesitation went into the water and shut the door behind him.

The stream ran over and among rocks, and between its brawling places was deep, with a swift current. Wertzal had precipitated himself into one of these deep basins, and not a moment too soon, for hearing Quirky yelp somewhere beyond, the savage leaped the chasm and made off on the other side, while the scout, drawing himself up, narrowly surveyed both banks, listened in every direction, and then began wading down with the current.

"If Quirky gives my whereabouts his usual circumference. I'll hev a chance to soak my feet for the distance of a mile afore old tuft finds out he's off the track. This ere ain't the ole hymn, 'Broad is the rode and smooth the way.' Yih! thar's sum inconvenient intostickses in this yere cobbly bottom; but it'll break the trail, Wertzal—break the trail, an' yer feet, too—leastwise this is opatroperius travellin', sure."

A mile beyond, Wertzal scrambled up from the bed of the brook and struck off to the east.

"To'ards mornin' light," he soliloquised.

Captain Vance did not find it as easy to escape detection and capture. Before he had ridden the distance of a mile and a half he was conscious of pursuit. The woman whom he held firmly upon his horse also heard it, and her heart beat in a quick and almost audible manner.

The first words which she had uttered that night were:

"Save me—they're coming."

With the gallant brevity of his nature, Captain Vance returned answer to both questions:

"I will—I know it."

"They're nearer," she gasped, a few moments later.

"They are, I believe."

"How far is it to any outpost or settlement?"

"Many miles. And daylight in an hour or two."

"Mercy! we are lost. Please, please, leave me to my fate, and save yourself. It is your right—pray leave me."

"Never!" said Captain Dave, between his teeth.

"I wouldn't be taken. I have a knife. They *are* much nearer—please, leave me."

Her articulation was broken by the rapidity of their flight, but every word uttered by her sweet voice was understood by her rescuer.

"Never!" was his only reply.

As the sound of pursuit grew every moment more distinct, he spurred the mare forward.

"Just to the brook, Jet, just to the brook," he urged.

They heard it brawling at last, off to the left. Jet strained every muscle, until, fierce brute as she was, her breath came in short, loud gasps.

"We must dismount," called out Vance, swinging his companion down, and springing from the saddle himself. "Now, Jet, keep right ahead—keep well ahead—lively, Jet," and Captain Dave slapped her flank with his leathern whip-lash as she galloped away.

Captain Dave sprang down the deep and rocky bank of the mountain stream and called back:

"Give me your hands—spring down—you shall not fall, but—they're close up—quick!"

They only had time to crouch under the shelving banks, when the pursuers, decoyed by the sound of the fleeing horse, dashed past.

"If they overtake her and find no one," whispered the trembling woman.

"Jet won't be overtaken. She'll run a proper distance, and then she'll run up a ravine and wedge herself in out of harm's way; but we must take to the water, elsewise some straggling party, if not these just passed, will find the trail and follow us. If this is the stream which I imagine it to be—and the banks seem to indicate it—at a certain point, further down, a small cavern is visible from the bed of the torrent, into which we may have to crawl and await the coming of another night. The dawn is too near for us to hope to start on a return journey over the vast plains lying between us and the nearest settlement."

"Anywhere, anywhere. I would creep into any hole, any place, to escape that awful, awful captivity," whispered the woman.

Their progress over the rough and brawling bottom was slow enough, but they had advanced a considerable distance ere daylight began to show through the haze in the eastern sky.

Vance now began looking anxiously along the left shore of the stream for the small, rocky projection, which was a sort of stone drop to the entrance of the small cave to which he had referred, and which, on a similar occasion to this, he had discovered, and hidden in for days together. He was well aware if he was amiss in his reckoning now, their danger was most imminent, and momentarily increasing with the dawning light. But he began to discover landmarks that convinced him he was right, and ere long he descried the rock overhanging the water, but close down to it.

"Here is the cavern just ahead," he exclaimed, hopefully.

"Please let us hasten," called out his companion, for the first time during the perilous journey betraying nervousness. "Oh, let us once get into shelter——"

"Caution, caution, my dear woman; one misstep on our ascent of the few feet of distance from the water to the cave, the dislodgement of one of those stones by an unwary movement, might give a clue to a devilish eye that would culminate in defeat and death. Step after me, touch no round stone, which might roll, tread evenly on the flat ones that they may not slip, and now, I will first crawl inside. The opening is of small dimensions, but there is more room beyond."

Captain Dave then carefully squeezed through the aperture, mindful not to leave a finger-mark on the loose earth, and his companion emulated his example, only breathing freely when she was nestled in the damp cavity.

"This is a woeful place into which to introduce a lady," gallantly remarked Captain Vance.

"Just now the palace of a queen would pale beside it," softly answered this brave woman.

After a time, hearing no sound to disturb them, and being sure that the brawling of the brook would drown any echo of their whispered conversation, Captain Dave questioned his companion in regard to her captivity.

The reader has divined long before this that the captive was Emily Armstrong. In a cautious whisper she narrated what we already know, and then continued:

"I suppose that my fever had long left me before I could believe myself sane. I distinctly recollect the moment when reason returned, but when, instead, I thought I had gone mad. I opened my eyes and stared about the small, confined, ill-smelling bark lodge. I thought that I was in a nightmare, convinced from the fact that I could not turn myself, and having the greatest difficulty in getting my hand to my head. I found my nightmare condition increased by the absence of my long, abundant hair. My head seemed only to be covered by an overgrown beard. Before my very eyes too was a human figure, with a smoke-color face the size of a platter, and a pipe nearly the dimensions and blackness of a man's boot in her mouth, from which she drew out bucketfuls of smoke. My agony was such that I made a moan, and the horrid woman came near and glanced at me with her pig-eyes. She immediately whipped up a potion in a sort of skillet, and clapping her arm under my head forced me to drink. When I again awoke I began to be conscious of my surroundings, but, of course, was too weak to feel deeply my condition. As the days passed I realized everything more and more fully, and for a time I only prayed for death to end my captivity. I learned by signs and grunts that I had been sick many weeks, and I really knew nothing of where I had been removed to during my unconsciousness, nor could I imagine what the end might be as regarded my captors' intentions. That they had not butchered me during my illness was proof that some other object than my death was in view with them, and ere long I was made to understand that I was destined to become the wife of the Chief No-po-cah-wa."

That the poor girl did not seek some means of self-destruction was owing to the fact that the savage did not press his suit, combined with the undying hope that some person would be sent to deliver her. She affirmed repeatedly that by day and night, feigning complete contentment, she had waited for some sign to show her that her salvation was near.

"My faith has met fulfilment," she concluded with infinite pathos in her tones.

"Not yet," answered Captain Vance, moderating her ecstacy; "there are many, many miles of dangerous journey yet for you."

"I know," she returned, "but you will heed that brave man's advice—you will not let me go alive?"

The gallant young scout gave her hand a reassuring pressure, and yet again caught it with a warning grasp.

Both of them sensed the fact that there was a jar above them of heavy feet running on the bank.

They judged it to be broad daylight, by the glimmer on the water of the brook, but they had no means of knowing that the rushing tramp above them was old Wertzal himself, who, while they carefully waded the stream, was miles above in the same fork, devouring the distance three yards to their one; and who now, in the broadening light of morning, was charging for a distant thicket at a muscle-trying pace.

"And to think I haven't an ounce of food to offer you," Dave said, later in the day, "my mare bore off my rations entire."

"That does not signify," answered Emily; "there are times in our lives, Captain Vance, when one can bear common privations without a murmur."

"To-night, if we can get off safely, and I can recall my mare who is not many miles from here, we shall find some venison attached to the saddle-bow. Here, let me put my jacket behind your head, and I wish you would endeavor, as much as your cramped position will allow, to obtain some needful rest."

She accepted his advice, feeling that he was right; for all her strength might be taxed to its utmost before the Plains were crossed.

She would gladly have slept for a few hours so that time might more rapidly pass, but the dampness of the cavern made it unsafe to do so, besides, her feet and garments were uncomfortably cold and wet from the wading along the deep places of the stream.

Night came at last, and Vance passed outside to reconnoitre, being absent for nearly an hour, but neither saw nor heard anything to alarm him. He then returned for Emily, who in spite of all efforts, was shaking with cold, as she again cautiously passed down into the brook. Silently they waded along, but having several times gone beyond their depth and received a thorough wetting they deemed it expedient to take to the bank.

With commendable prudence Vance suggested a rapid walk for a mile or more to warm their blood, and after that whistled at intervals for his mare. But hour after hour was passed in rapid travel, and nothing was heard of the steed. He began to feel seriously alarmed, for he found that Emily's pace faltered. At last, however, his peculiar, bird-like whistle was answered by a shrill neigh, and the mare dashed out from a small valley and came within reach of her master's hand. He immediately tossed the right stirrup across to the left side, and folded his blouse into the hollow of the saddle. Upon this seat Emily was quite comfortably wedged in, and then Captain Vance, chirruping to Jet, struck off at a rapid pace.

At midnight, knowing the locality, he halted for an hour's rest, and gave Emily a chunk of the venison, advising her to waive any natural delicacy as to the state of the food, and seek the nourishment it would afford.

With the coming of day he was again obliged to halt, owing to the discovery of a smoke to the east of them, which might portend evil. It was but a short distance off, and leaving his companion in as sheltered a position as possible, he placed one of his revolvers in her hand and bade her, whatever might transpire, to hold to her place in the saddle.

"Keep closely within the shelter of this clump of bush—it allows you to see without being seen, and let no common danger allure you beyond its screen. Within it you have a chance to escape detection from any roving foe; without, there is none whatever."

He then, keeping within the shelter of the fringe of bushes that lined the stream on either side, moved in the direction of the smoke. The feelings of Emily can be better imagined than described, left alone as she was on that vast and trackless plain.

After an hour's moveless sitting, she found her position becoming extremely painful, and yet she dared not stir, for fear of slipping from her unstable seat, neither did she entertain the idea of alighting, feeling convinced that the vicious beast would object to her mounting again. In this manner she endured three hours of real bodily suffering, besides the distress of mind, before she was frightened into insensibility of ordinary pain by hearing the rush of a coming horse. One swift petition she sent to Heaven for protection, and then found her fears turned to sudden joy by the appearance of Captain Vance, mounted upon a beast of more than common capacity.

In a moment he had explained to her that the smoke arose from the camp-fire of a party of half-breed hunters and trappers, one or two of whom he had met at the military-posts a year previous. He had purchased the horse of them, with the understanding that they were to pass Fort H—— on their return and receive full pay for the beast from General T——, there being a perfect understanding between himself and that gentleman in regard to such transactions.

This much was good, but other news which he possessed was not so pleasant. The trappers informed him that a war-party of Apaches had passed their line of vision late the evening previous, heading directly across their proposed direction of travel. Still Captain Dave hardly felt justified in losing the remainder of the day in hiding; by so doing, perhaps inviting even greater chances of discovery on the morrow. He therefore advised that they should push ahead at a rapid pace, halting frequently on the eminences to survey the surrounding country.

Providence, however, had destined that Emily's troubles for the time being should be over. The fugitives had no serious cause for alarm during the journey, albeit many a party of roving red-skins was descried by them at different times scurrying across several points of the compass.

After days and days of alternate hurried and halting paces, with scanty rations and poor accommodations for travel, at least, on Emily's part, they came within a night's ride of the settlement of Burketon, to which Captain Dave, not otherwise advised, had deemed it expedient to ride.

The rain was pouring in torrents when they sighted, from a slight, rounded knoll, the first house, and Emily uttered a shrill scream of delight, and mended Jet's already hard gallop into a headlong run. The mare was nothing loth to be thus urged, being utterly disgusted with the recent campaign, and remembering Ben Burke's oat-bin. Captain Dave, divining how matters might culminate, persuaded his high-shouldered beast to keep neck and neck with the black mare, so that in the very door-yard of the pioneer, he sprang from his horse in time to catch his companion in her headlong fall to the earth. The brave girl, who had held her spirits up through the long months of captivity, in prayerful anticipation of this hour, no sooner reached its fulfilment and saw the sweet face of a white woman, as Kate Burke came hurrying out to welcome the newcomers, than sight, hearing, sense failed her, and with another inarticulate cry of bursting ecstacy, she fell unconscious upon the breast of her gallant deliverer.

"Ah, Catherine," said Captain Dave, as he bore the slight figure within—Miss Burke holding open the door—"I hardly expect you to thank me for bringing a patient to excite your sympathy and exact your care, but really, I knew not where else to convey her, until she could communicate with her friends."

Kate smiled up in his face, the while her hands were busy in removing Captain Dave's coat and other uncouth wrappings from the unconscious girl.

"Hospitality is the first law of pioneer life," she returned.

"And this poor girl is but just now freed from savage captivity."

Kate involuntarily clasped her hands, and then her face lighted up matchlessly.

"By your bravery? Oh, Captain Vance, what a man—what a hero you are?"

"Flattering as such encomiums are to vain man, Kathey, I must put in a disclaimer. Wertzal, in reality, discovered and rescued her from the immediate danger."

"But imposed full as great a task upon your gallant self to cross the plains and bring her in to the settlements. I am suffering of curiosity to hear all about her, but duty forbids. She is thoroughly chilled—and as all the boys are up at the mills, would you mind, Captain Vance, if I ask you to

kindle a fire on the hearth? First, if you please, raise her head and help me bear her into the sitting-room."

Captain Dave lent a ready and apt hand to assist, even so far forgetting his dignity as to crouch upon the hearth, puff out his cheeks enormously, and blow up the refractory embers until the pungent smoke extracted a flood of tears from his stern, unflinching eyes.

Kathy, from the next room, where she was chafing Emily's cold hands and applying restoratives, glanced at him smilingly and nodded approval of his praiseworthy efforts to assist.

"You *are* a hero," she stoutly affirmed, as Dave, coaxing a forked red blaze up through the kindlings, arose and mopped his tear-wet lashes.

"Do you know," she continued, while the enlarging blaze began to send out a pleasant warmth, "that I believe the chivalrous performing of the petty services of mean, everyday life taxes the strength of the spirit full as much as some marvellous display of heroic action with its accompanying round of applause?"

"You are right, inasmuch as an occasional sword-thrust, with time to heal the wound, does not hurt like a constant rolling upon prickles."

Catherine nodded approval of his sentiments, and then suddenly and softly exclaimed:

"How could so slight and delicately-nurtured a creature as this girl bear the privations and exposure of captivity?"

"This, no doubt, is another case of mind triumphant over matter. Evidently, from what she told me, the faith that she would be rescued has sustained her through it all. But I look for a fearful reaction, as nature takes care to revenge all outrages imposed upon her; and for many days, hard riding, insufficient food, and frequent showers, have taxed her strength to the utmost."

Yet no such evil consequences followed Emily's exposure, owing doubtless to Catherine's efficient nursing. In three days she was able to join the family group of an evening, and relate in detail her painful experience.

We must, just here, make a momentary digression. We claim that Captain Vance was gallantry itself; to prove which assertion, bear in mind that he had rescued the white captive without an inkling in regard to age or personal appearance, the night being too dark, and the peril too great, to allow of trifling considerations weighing in the matter. But when a few days' rest and happy surroundings had restored Emily's beauty to its freshness, and brought back her vivacity of manner, it is not in human nature to say that had he known what a charming model of humanity clung to him for support, he would not have dared double perils in the rescue.

"Indeed, Mrs. Armstrong," said Vance, "a letter is not a reliable means of communication between here and B——, as hardly one mail in ten reaches that place in safety."

"What then, please?"

"I will undertake to bear any dispatch which you wish to send to Mr. Armstrong, and will bring the gentleman back with me, if possible."

"How very, very good you are, Captain Vance. It will never be permitted me to repay your kindness."

"It is nothing," he returned. "I have business somewhat in that direction; at least, I will not be taken much from my direct route; so, if you choose, I will see Mr. Armstrong."

Emily, of course, did choose, and immediately wrote a brief note to George, which she insisted upon placing herself in the breast-pocket of Captain Dave's jacket.

Then she had to wait a week before she could expect him—*them*—to return. She passed the time in assisting Kate, and in getting the dimples back to their former localities, varying those occupations by singing to young Harry Burke the chorus of gay hunting songs.

Not a cloud rested upon her sunny face. No "coming event cast its shadow before."

Of course, after her miraculous escape, there was reason to believe that Cousin Dick might be equally fortunate, and by and by they would all be brought again together.

At the end of the week Captain Vance returned alone, and with no joyful news. Arriving at B——, he learned that George Armstrong, some months previous, had gone from the place, leaving his prosperous business in a way that it could be closed up on short notice. Afterward, it had been closed up by his agent, who was absent at the time of Vance's visit, and none of the townsmen knew whither he had gone.

"To the East, of course," Emily returned, aghast. "And what will he think when he learns how long a time I have been absent?"

She immediately forwarded a letter to her uncle, stating facts, and making inquiries. She had weary waiting this time. It was mid-winter before she got any reply, and then it was not her uncle's handwriting on the envelope. She uttered a cry of distress on glancing at the signature and the contents of the missive. Her uncle had died months previously of malignant fever. His lawyer wrote the letter. At this news, Emily dropped down in a sort of despair.

"What shall I do?" she wailed, helplessly.

"Don't you recall any friend of your husband residing in your native city of whom, by writing, you could gain information of his whereabouts?"

Mrs. Armstrong pondered awhile, and then brightened up wonderfully.

"I might address Wade & Scribner, his old employers."

"Do so, by all means," continued her friend. "Briefly narrate the circumstances, and request immediate response."

"But it will take such a very long time to get the return," was the sorrowful answer. "And what a wretched twisting up of probabilities and improbabilities."

"Nevertheless, keep up your heart; you are with friends who are willing to serve you."

"Dear Kate, only last night I was thinking of you, and found my heart thanking God that he had kindly swept me into the shelter of your arms."

In due time, which proved weary waiting for Emily, a letter was brought to her from "Wade & Scribner." It was vague and unsatisfactory. Armstrong had been in the place months before. They had just seen him for a moment. On the receiving of her letter, and its remarkable contents, they had delayed replying until they could prosecute diligent inquiries. Persons who had seen George Armstrong in the city affirmed that he had tarried but twenty-four hours, and seemed too absent-minded and generally uncommunicative for them to ascertain anything about past business arrangements or future anticipations. Whither he had departed on leaving no one knew, so far as the firm could learn.

Pretty Emily cried herself heartsick, which was very natural in her case, and positively refused to be comforted.

In a wild country, among entire strangers, penniless, and with all this mystery about her friends to prey upon her mind, one could not expect that she could feel otherwise than terribly depressed in spirit. Her story went abroad, and every one who heard it felt a lively interest in the young, friendless creature so unexpectedly deprived of all relatives.

"Evidently, wilful desertion on the part of Armstrong," she overheard Ben Burke telling his sister. "As his accounts were all settled up, it is quite probable that he left for parts unknown."

The remark struck her like a blow. She dared not entertain the idea—she could not. Oh, if she only had Dick; if she only could find him, then her case would not be hopeless. This she repeated over to others, in her pathetic way, until people, for miles around, were cognizant of her sad history, and every one felt interested to find some tidings of her lost friends. The firm to which she had written concerning George had also answered other questions relating to Richard Marsh. He had not returned to the East since they started off together. No one seemed to know anything about him.

"He must be dead, then," she had exclaimed, burying her face in her hands, and weeping bitterly.

"Was ever life so completely wrecked as mine?" she moaned.

"Do not despair," Kate spoke, comfortingly; "so long as there is uncertainty there is place for hope, my dear."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BOY GOD.

The creeping plants and climbing vines that decorated the balcony pillars, and caught here and there upon the open trellices, with the mellow moonlight filtering through them, showed beautiful filagree patterns upon the floor.

The boys called this Kate's bower. Indeed, she had taken great pains in its floral decoration, obtaining seeds from the East to mingle with the flowers of the West. The trumpet-flower, honeysuckle, and nasturtium, allowed more delicate tendrils to be interwoven with their sturdy vines, while the ivies drooped gracefully from their swinging baskets overhead. Kate had an inspiration in regard to the arrangement of flowers, so the balcony shaded by its budding and bursting Springtime verdure was known as Kate's bower.

And while the new moon, dipping westward, hung languidly above the horizon's verge, two persons walked the length of the balcony, back and forth, hedged in with red leaves and green tendrils. All abroad were the sweet scents going out from the newly awakened earth, and the warm western wind drifted about odors as delicious as those of the fabled censer of "Araby the Blest."

By the wavering, sauntering gait of the lady one could read a mind painfully preoccupied, and yet alive to present surroundings. The man's face was pale, with a firm outline of the lips, half seen through the silky moustache, and his manner evinced excitement, only partly subdued and held in check by main force. The two were Captain Vance and Emily Armstrong.

"I think," he said, at length, "that I have a right to ask you to consider my feelings somewhat, Emily, so far as to claim a conditional promise. You do not know that the life which I have led, the dangers, the perils that have often environed me, have absorbed all the milk and water attributes of my nature, giving me an intensity of feeling that the housed and pampered class of humanity cannot appreciate. There is no halting; no half-way business for me." Emily winced.

"Captain Dave," she softly answered, with the naturally laughing eye sobered by sorrow. "I cannot answer differently from what I have already done. If I could be your slave for a term of years, if I could give you half of my life, it would not lift the weight of gratitude which I feel for you in consequence of the inestimable services which you have rendered me. But I do not yet know if my husband has deserted me."

"Every proof seems yours that he has, otherwise he would have used some means to learn your whereabouts; he would have left word with some person in your native city where he could be found; or directed them what to tell you at B——if you ultimately made your way there."

"I know these arguments present themselves to me with crushing force, but yet I do not feel that I am free."

"Free yourself. Our laws make amends in this respect for the crime of desertion; divorce yourself from him."

"Oh, no, I couldn't; I never should feel like doing that—it's very terrible to me this putting aside such sacred ties."

"I see," returned he, with man's stubborn unreasonableness, "you do not care for me."

She gently lifted his hand with hers; "that terrible right hand," she had called it, and caressed it with all her trembling fingers.

"Captain Vance," she said, softly and solemnly, "I *do* care for you; I never can tell how much; next—next to George, you know, you are all the world to me. I—it don't seem to me that I could endure all this uncertainty about him, and Cousin Dick, if I hadn't you."

He made an impatient gesture as if to snatch away his hand. She held it tighter.

"You mustn't, Captain Vance," with half a sob in her sweet voice. "You mustn't be disagreeable and fractious with me—think what I have to bear now."

"That is just it," he said, regardless if his sentence were very grammatically put or otherwise. "I want to shield and protect you; to make peace where you are distressed. As I have told you, my fierce, wild life has given me intensity of feeling. I long for a beacon to guide me through dangers and temptations, to bring me safe in from struggling with the world. Be my guide, my light, Emily, even as you now are my love."

"Dear, dear Captain Dave," she said, with an hysterical quiver in her voice, and still hugging "that terrible right hand." "I should never dare; I mean, if all this mystery and doubt were cleared away, or had never been; to love and to marry again; to think of Georgie's and my own romantic love coming to this end," and she quite wept now. Inconsistent girl.

"All men are not alike," laconically argued Dave.

"I know," she answered," but it is the strangest thing how any one can waste a thought upon insignificant me, with dear, magnificent Kate Burke right before their eyes."

"Kate is not my ideal, although a better, braver, truer woman never trod our planet earth than she; besides, she belongs to another man."

"And I suppose that I do," added Emily, giving Dave's hand another little squeeze before she dropped it.

She had adroitly brought the conversation to an abrupt termination. Still they sauntered to and fro.

By and by she spoke again.

"You will not cease your efforts yet, Captain Dave? I am so helpless without you."

"I will never cease instituting inquiries and searching until something definite is known of your friends, and your mind put at ease."

At this moment Catherine stepped outside to them.

"Emily," she said, "Ben tells me that Mr. Vickey has returned from Gray's township, bringing an old scout with him, who has heard your story, and who affirms that at the outpost ninety miles southwest of here, there was a man lying severely wounded by Indian arrows while crossing the plains somewhere, who answers to the name of Richard Marsh."

Emily uttered a cry of excitement.

"Did he tell nothing more? Will you go to Mr. Vickey's with me?"

"My brother did not say that he told anything farther, but perhaps you had better see him for yourself."

Catherine brought out a hat and shawl for each, and with Captain Vance for escort, they sallied forth.

They had to pass several houses before they reached Vickey's, for within the year Burketon had grown rapidly. The site had been good, lying close upon the banks of a brawling fork, which after a wild struggle about the country, farther down poured as a tributary into L—— river. The stream had been made available by judicious damming, for different sorts of mills, thus affording a proper centre for active business.

At Mr. Vickey's they found the scout, who, to Emily's anxious inquiries, answered that, months previously, being at Burketon and hearing her history, he had kept the items well in memory, and thus recognized the name of Richard Marsh.

"Did he see the man?"

"No, he was too ill, the attending post-physician had reported, being mostly delirious; but on some of his garments was printed in India ink the name of Richard Marsh."

"I must see him," said Emily, looking from one face to another—"but how?"

"It is a long distance, could you ride it?"

"If—if I had an escort," she naively rejoined.

"Of course I will accompany you," said Vance.

"And she may have Daisy."

"And start *now*," continued Emily eagerly. "Dear, dear, what a trouble I am to you all; you will be glad to have me well off your hands."

Catherine placed a finger on the pretty mouth.

"Don't take it for granted; wait until we tell you so."

"No, it is not a very dangerous route," Vance answered her query. "We can stop at H—— for a few hours rest and refreshment, and have daylight to-morrow to finish the journey."

It would be impossible to tell what an exhilarating influence this bit of news had upon the girl's spirits. Richard might not be so terribly wounded after all, and he might be able to tell her something of George—at least she would have Richard. And her manner was feverish with excitement as they rode away beneath the star-lighted sky.

Companionship usually mars the contemplation of nature in her holiest guise, but on this occasion neither party felt like interrupting the other's meditations with idle remarks. They galloped evenly along the route, and after passing over a distance of nearly twenty miles, thought best to stop at a small settlement for rest and refreshment.

But Emily's anticipated rest was marred almost as soon as she entered the slab inn, yoleped Eagle House, by discovering a taciturn individual in a dark corner, whose evident watching of her every movement gave her a sudden faintness about the heart. This stranger was masked by a broad-brimmed hat, termed in some sections of the western country "a jay-hawker," which, being jammed closely down over his eyes, effectually concealed every feature.

Remembering another awful night, months previous, when the sinister watching of an evil eye had ultimately worked her such fearful woe, and feeling afraid that the present and the former individual were identical, she sank trembling into a seat; and, on Captain Vance's entrance, after seeing to the welfare of the horses, she sprang to meet him with all the vivacity of a child. A few moments after Vance entered the room, the moody stranger stalked outside.

"Oh," exclaimed Emily, white and trembling, "that man, that awful man, seemed watching me just as I was watched that other dreadful night, when all my troubles began. I think if I could have seen under that disguising hat, I should have found the devilish eyes of the half-breed piercing my very soul."

"No doubt, my dear girl, you might have seen the snaky eyes of a half-breed, but whether of that particular one it would puzzle you to tell, as there is a striking similarity in the features of the Indian cross-breeds of the prairie. But in this case, doubtless, the fellow's curiosity and admiration ignored the proprieties. A really pretty white woman in this vicinity is something to be stared at."

Emily shuddered and moved nearer her companion.

"I shall never get over that fright," she affirmed—"never;" and glancing up she caught Vance's arm with a low cry. Outside the house, evidently looking into the window at them, was the stranger.

"This grows annoying," exclaimed Vance, feeling for his pistol.

"Not for the world," whispered Emily. "You cannot foresee the result of any rash act and we having such a lonesome distance to go yet."

"You are right," replied her companion. "If he wants anything of us let him introduce the subject."

"But," he went on, as he noticed the man again pass the window, "I am at a loss to know which of us he is watching. I am unluckily known hereabouts as belonging to the Vigilance Committee, and they have marked me."

"Then, pray, do not let us ride alone across the dangerous locality."

"I was just about to propose taking the stage, which I find is due here in an hour, as being the easier, and perhaps, safer mode of conveyance for yourself."

Emily shuddered.

"Oh, it don't seem as if I ever could ride again in one of those horrid stages, but there is no choice, and the urgency of the case admits of no delay."

"I will see the driver immediately on his arrival, and secure seats."

Boniface now called the couple out to supper, which had been in process of preparation since their arrival. Before it was finished the Jehu belonging to Patterson's Line came up, gave his orders about the horses, and then entered the inn to await his supper, which was immediately forthcoming. He had a full "fare," all of whom came in for a bit and sup, or a smoke, as the gender might signify.

"Always room," showing his white teeth in a still smile as he answered Captain Dave. "Should make room for *Vance*, anyhow, if it necessitated my taking to the leader's back, postillion fashion. Always like," he added significantly, "to have a few crack shots on board the old rockaway. Colonel Darley, Vance," introducing one of his passengers.

The two men, each known to the other by border fame, grasped hands in an emphatic manner.

"Now, ladies," said the handsome driver, "you can do away with the fidgets for the rest of the route, and sleep as cosily as if tucked in your little trundle beds. Even Bill Grouchy, with his fingers itching to fumble Uncle's satchel, would hardly venture to open an entertainment with two such veteran actors."

"You never have had any difficulty between here and Fort H——?" questioned Vance, while Colonel Darley was making pretty Emily's acquaintance.

"Once or twice," ground Jehu between his teeth. "Took a passenger up a month or so ago, of whom I had suspicions. There were only us two, as there having been no trouble for months my guard was dismissed, and, by Jupiter, a little this side of the fort he and I got on such intimate footing that he clung to one end of the mail-bag and I to the other. He had the longest knife, but I had the longest arm; the consequences were, I got his measure before he did mine," and Jehu unconcernedly quaffed his cup of coffee.

"But they know—they are posted," he went on, "when we carry people competent to defend themselves and others, and are not up to roll-call then. By-the-by," lowering his voice, "who is that 'jay-hawker' yonder? he seems to have the mumps."

"Don't know—he means mischief, I think."

"Is watching you, I reckon," returned the driver. "I always spot that class of loafers, but"—drawing out his watch—"it is quite time for — *Relays;*" elevating his voice in a way that sent the small groom outside in haste.

The vehicle came up, the passengers clambered in, and Jehu, after settling his cap, pulled on his gloves, called out "Whoa, there—steady, Beelzebub," and leaped to the box.

Just then the "jay-hawker" caught the rod of the vehicle, and prepared to leap up outside.

"To the left-hand, stranger," called Jehu, hauling up his feet, and rocking the newcomer to that side. "No offence—but it's a custom of mine when I take up an outside passenger, on these wide and windy flats, to bind in the pistol-arm so—to my left—you understand."

The stranger uttered some expletive not understood by his complacent companion, who immediately fished up two segars from some subterranean pocket of his coat, and offered one to his neighbor; but it was refused.

"Crafty," thought Jehu, "the fiery end of a segar would have given me a glimpse of his face—he knew it. All right."

Emily, reassured by the presence of two other women and several gentlemen, experienced none of the horrors which she had anticipated.

Stopping in the morning for relays, and to drop some and take up other passengers, again changing horses at noon, they got safely and rapidly over the distance, and arrived about sunset at the fort.

"Gone, ma'am, an hour ago," was the surgeon's answer, to Emily's inquiry concerning the wounded man.

"Gone where?" not coming directly at his meaning.

"Oh, to the strange country—dead."

She clasped her hands in much anguish.

"Did he leave no word for any one?"

"Words enough, ma'am, but not one coherent sentence."

"May I—can I see him?"

"Y-e-s-s, ma'am, certainly; I should advise not. It is useless now, and—and you couldn't identify him."

"It's a peculiar case," Captain Vance interrupted, in two minutes giving the surgeon an idea of the circumstances.

"And how did it happen?" he questioned.

"Nothing is known—might have belonged to a train—might have been simply a hunter. Was found and brought in by some scouts looking after a party of sneaking redskins. But he's disfigured badly, died hard; and I don't advise the lady to see him. The name of Richard Marsh was stamped on the lining of his blouse, and the letters R. M. were cut on his powder flask."

"Captain Vance," said Emily, resolutely, "I must see my cousin. I should not be satisfied otherwise."

"Very well, ma'am," affirmed the doctor, "as you choose. Dimmis," to a half-breed boy lounging near, "show these people to the bunk of the dead man."

They followed the boy, Captain Dave in advance of his companion. On the coarse pallet, covered by a blanket, lay a straight and silent form.

Emily came on tiptoe to the rough couch. Vance carefully drew off the covering.

The corpse was terribly disfigured. The scalp was gone, its place being supplied by a patch of silk dipped in some pungent, sickening fluid; the face was gashed; the head broken in by the temple; the fingers separated from one hand in its desperate struggle to ward off the murderous knife; the sickening, horrible spectacle almost made the poor girl faint.

"He is not my cousin," she said, moving away—"his stature, complexion and hair are in exact contrast with Richard's. But, oh, Captain Vance, how came he by those articles on which are marked the name of Richard Marsh? There can be no doubt but that my poor Dick is murdered. And if I had only been in time, something of his fate might have been learned from the dead man's lips."

"It is a sad, sad affair, the sorrowful features of which are not brightened up by the hard journey hither."

"Yes, and what trouble I have caused you, also."

"That is nothing; at least, it will not be after I have returned you safely to your friends in Burketon."

"Will you start homeward to-night?"

"I think not; you need rest, and I have some matters to talk over with Colonel Darley."

"Well," she returned, "I would like to remain to-night, if it does not inconvenience you—for I have a wretched headache, and am otherwise wearied and sick at heart."

So the matter was arranged, and Vance and Darley, in their quarters at the Fort inn, smoked diligently, and compared notes and experiences.

"I rather think," said the colonel, at length, "if you do not get your appointment on the Indian Agency business, that I can find a niche in our frontier out-post that will afford you a splendid opportunity for promotion, and—for getting a knife or bullet opening to your vitals;" and Darley smiled grimly, and smoothed his grizzled mustache.

"The former, of course, would be an agreeable state of affairs; the latter, I shall endeavor to prevent or avoid."

"Your past experience is favorable to long life; and if you would like to mention the position at the out-post to General A——, in person, by changing your route to-morrow, you can touch at S—— to-morrow night, where he expects to be on his way to New Mexico."

"I think that I will take that swing out of my way—it will make the difference of a few miles only."

"Ten, perhaps, and as the old saw is, you will then have two strings to your bow; but really, Vance, what is your fancy to seek to quarter yourself among the copper-plated devils? You will lose all knowledge of civilization, and Sha Paw-nee-wah yourself to death."

"I hardly believe that I shall acquire sufficient liking for the aboriginal in the rough to lose my identity."

"Just so; and you think that you will slough off to S——, and see the General yourself, so that I need not mention the subject if I see him first."

"I think that I will see him. When do you start from here?"

"About midnight, I imagine; and if it was not for that protegée of yours—pretty Mrs. Armstrong—I should be glad of your company."

"I would gladly set out with you, but must return her safely to her friends."

Conversation soon diverged upon general topics, and an hour later the two frontier heroes parted, each to go his own way and encounter the fortunes or vicissitudes allotted to his portion.

At midnight Vance, lying awake and restless, heard Darley gallop away.

CHAPTER XVI.

DANGER.

Owing to some accident the stage did not make its regular connection, and, therefore, Vance and Mrs. Armstrong did not proceed on their homeward journey until late in the day. It was very annoying, with the prospect of a violent storm setting in by nightfall, yet "what can't be cured must be endured" is a very consoling, and also a stubborn old maxim.

It was early evening when they arrived in S——, and a furious gale was blowing from the stormy quarter, not making it advisable to proceed farther that night. Captain Dave found his disgust complete on being informed that General A—— had passed through the place early in the afternoon, making all the extra journey and delay amount to nothing.

S—— was one of the toadstool towns peculiar to the West, which—getting the site of a future railroad—spring up in a night. The inn was the most imposing of the buildings, although the place boasted six stores, four of which were tippling-shops. The other two had dry-goods and groceries in the front part—"potiary's" *drams* without the *scruples* in the rear, and several kinds of *liquor-ish* for wheezy travellers. Besides these were a number of respectable cabins, and yards full of lumber and rubbish which were being rapidly tacked together for places of business.

The inn was kept by a barrel-shaped man, whose fiery-hued face, if it really did not exhibit the vulgar "toddy blossom," showed a rarer flower—the *night-blooming-cereus*—on his nose. His wife, the landlady, was a stolid German frau, whose admixture of the "Faderland" and English language made a villainous concoction of tongues perfectly indigestible.

The host was urbanity personified, and made the new arrivals volubly welcome, opening with original and striking prophecies of the weather. There were a few loafers about, but the most of them were exchanging coins over "sledge," "poker," and other "tricks that are vain."

The rain swept heavily against the house almost as soon as our friends were inside, but the appetizing odors of the coming supper enlivened the spirits of the party. The prospect of a good meal usually does cheer the drooping spirits.

Emily, still frightened at her own shadow, hugged closely to the ample proportions of the German dame, she being the only woman, excepting a pretty girl of ten years—about the premises.

Vance was mildly talking of the state of the country with the few smokers in the bar-room.

Later, while he and Emily were eating supper, there was the sound of fresh arrivals, and the wheezy host "nipping" at an imaginary hull between his teeth, bustled outside to welcome the new-comers.

There was a yell of "hullow, Tom, Dick and Harry," and a stampede from the stormy quarter into the shelter of the building, where after a half-hour's delay, probably used in attending to the horses, they came in to the supper-room. They were burly fellows and hard riders, judging by their mud-splashed boots and garments; and as they blustered in, banging the water from their hats against the jambs, Vance eyed them keenly, even while all were exchanging apparently hearty salutations. In a brief time, however, the new acquaintances were in a lively discussion concerning the roads, and the new towns springing up in out-of-the-way-places, and the rapid rise of land.

So these mud-splashed fellows let out that they were land agents, and had been running a sort of race after a desirable government tract adjoining an Indian reservation; and they winked and laughed and made uproarious over the trick that they were about to play somebody.

Vance occasionally joined in the hilarious conversation, but evidently divining that the fellows had been making too free with fermented corn already, he kept at a proper distance and smoked his segar, while his keen eye travelled from one to the other in the restless manner peculiar to him.

So soon as Emily could dispatch her meal, she gracefully withdrew, and Vance set his teeth firmly together, expecting her leave-taking to be the signal for some of those offensive remarks usually indulged in by the class of men around him; but wonderful to relate no comment followed.

An hour after the meal was finished, the hard riders proposed visiting Nape's saloon, and the whole party left.

"Do you know them?" Vance asked of the landlord as they went out.

"Can't call up their names now, but they've been here before. Hev a sip?"

Vance thanked him, but believed he didn't care to drink, and lighting a fresh segar stepped out upon the piazza on the leeward side of the inn. In about half an hour the landlord retired.

Emily, weary and ill at ease, had been shown her room on leaving the supper table, and found a dismal pastime in listening to the rush and lull, rush and lull of the storm.

Three several times she had pressed her hands upon the arms of her chair, half arising, as though to retire, but withheld by some powerful invisible force, she settled back again. Once she crossed the room and raised the window. It was the end of the house turned away from the storm, and the sounds reaching her ears in the lulls were not reassuring. In a booth to the right a modern Paganini was driving a cracked fiddle frantic by his friction of the waxed ends, interspersing its wild, tortured wails with fragments of classic lore—"Down—*outside*—swing—ladies' chain—promen*aarde*—all," the storm making dashes between the passages. To the left was the jar—rol-l-l—bump! of the ten-pins; and darting at right-angles through the windy and rain-sodden darkness were cracked voices hiccoughing out shouts of laughter and broken snatches of song. It was dreadful, but she did not draw the window down again. Instead, she drew to and fastened the rude blinds. As the echoes of all these awful sounds came to her, she wished herself on the stormy quarter of the house, where the beating and jarring of the elements might drown less pleasant noises.

Again she crossed the little room and listened by the window. The storm went roaring past the house, and a little beyond picked up a score of weird cries to join in its glee. By and by Vance came in. She heard the little girl lighting him up the stairs—heard her say, "The end chamber," and "Good-night," in her broken dialect.

"Now, of course," said Emily to herself, "I can retire." But she only came to sit upon the edge of the bed and listen, becoming more nervous and wakeful each moment. Finally an odd fancy seized her to extinguish her light, which she did in the most careless manner, without first having convinced herself that nothing foreign to the place and hour was within the apartment.

It seemed to her before she extinguished the light that a score of eyes were outside blinking at her through the crevices of the blinds; now, in the darkness, the feeling changed to the idea that there were tangible shadows gambolling in the small space around her. The house had either gone to sleep, or else the storm drowned all echoes. Once it appeared to her that mice were chinking in the closet near by; again she fancied that she heard whispering and the jar of soft footsteps close by her.

"I shall go mad," she said, "before it ever comes morning."

Softly she again unhasped the shutters of the window. She knew that Plutonian darkness revelled without, and yet she longed for a breath of fresh air, even if it did come wet with the storm. Cautiously she thrust out her head, with the shrinking emotion one feels when expecting a glare of lightning in the face.

The tempest still raged, the wild noises rioted as before, but there was something more. What at first seemed the mumbling of the storm, by more intense listening she discovered was voices near, conversing in low tones. The persons must be hugged close into the jog between the main building and an out-house, and quite sheltered from the fury of the gale.

"Why don't he put out his light and go to bed?" were the first intelligible words.

"What makes yer wait?" was the response. "Three to one is fair odds in our favor."

"The devil! I've known Vance, when cornered, to fight half a dozen and come off first best in the bargain. It ain't eleven yet—he'll quiet down before one."

"In the meantime, what if old Belton wakes?"

"He won't; but if he does, I've turned the key on him. No, sir, I hain't had this hang-up chase for nothing this time. Mr. Vigilance Committee has got to give us a tight-rope performance 'tween this 'n day-light."

"Cuss them bosses!" spoke the third individual for the first time; "they pound so like thunder that I can't hear nothin'. Let's go into Nape's for another drink, an' by that time mebbe he'll snuff his ole light out. Remember one on us has got to stan' under the winder, while the other two get inter his room. No reaks, ye know. I used him jump once before, when five of us swinglers were arter him, an'—"

The rest was lost, as they turned around the corner of the out-building to go to the saloon near at hand. If they had crossed by the end of the house instead, they must have discovered the open window.

Emily drew the shutters close and pressed her hand upon her heart to still its tumultuous beating, so that she might consider what to do.

She recognized one of the voices—a peculiar stuffed-up voice—as belonging to one of the three land agents. That pretended occupation was a sham to throw Vance off his guard. What a reputation the man must have on the border, if these three burly villains felt it expedient to resort to stratagem to secure him! She must make her way to his chamber and warn him. All this rushed instantly through her mind. Noiselessly she crossed the floor and slid back the bolt, that being the only fastening that she had noticed on retiring. But the door refused to yield. The dreadful truth dawned upon her. The clicking was not the nibbling of mice; instead, it was a key turning in the lock outside. And the whispers and the sound of feet were not imaginary. What could she do? If she sprang from her window to seek the main entrance of the house, she might fall into the clutches of some of the ruffians, who were likely to return at any moment, and probably had a guard stationed to watch all movements. They had either drugged the landlord's liquor, or else the affair was understood by all parties.

Her senses nearly yielded to the horrors of the situation, but in a moment she rallied and concentrated her thoughts upon some method for warning Vance.

She again threw open the shutters at the imminent risk of discovery, and looked out. Her room was at the end of the house, his chamber the one directly above, and she could see where a blotch of light from his window rested upon the end of the stable. He was still up. If she only dared to step outside—if she only had a stick or pole with which to rap upon his window. Her mind ran over the few articles in her apartment—nothing for this emergency. Suddenly she felt of the curtains at the window. The buff hangings had a stick run into the hem at the bottom—if there was one at the top, and in the curtain at the other window? Mounting carefully into a chair, she wrenched the article down and slipped out the two sticks, then sought the other window. In a moment she had the four slender strips in her hand. But how should she join them together so as to reach his window? There were no strings connected with the curtains. It was but the work of a minute to draw out the lacings of her boots and splice the sticks. She then leaned from her window, and with a loudly beating heart tapped upon the casement above her own.

What if Vance slept? Again she tapped, leaning so far out that she risked toppling headlong. This time Captain Dave heard the sound, and noiselessly raised the sash. She hardly knew what she said, and much of it was borne away on the fitful blast. Now a lull, and Vance makes out:

"Trapped—not land-agents—border outlaws—coming to kill you—by the door—by the window outside;" and the obliging gale still pausing to roar among the branches of a distant belt of trees, she catches his broken reply:

"All ready—stand my chance from the window. Town full of roughs, thirsting for blood. Fastened in—leap from your window—escape outrage—leap—take to the road—hide in the grass—leap. God! leap! Stand your chance—they're coming—*leap—leap*—OUTSIDE."

She understood, and acted upon his advice—and not an instant too soon. She also heard the tread of approaching feet, and, wild with terror, sprang from the window and crouched unhurt behind some rubbish only a moment before the dusky outline of several forms passed between her vision and the dim gray of the rainy mist. She then flitted away a short distance at random, being too confused to note the points of the compass. Yet she could not choose to go any great distance until she knew the worst. Strangely fascinated, she crept back to the rear of the outbuildings, and, shaking with terror, awaited the horrible development of the infernal plan. During the succeeding silence, she could picture the murderers creeping up the stairway, while other ruffians crouched under the window. No ray of light now streamed from the chamber upper panes. Emily grew hot and then cold as her shrinking nerves endeavored to brace themselves for the conflict.

Suddenly the crack of a pistol traversed the night air, and pierced the listener's brain like a red-hot dart; then a fierce yell and another report.

"Up with the Vigilants—Bill, fire, you fool, he'll dodge us yet. There he goes like a comet—lit right on Bowers and made a quash—hurrah!—let him have the pills—now for the gall—"

Emily waited for no more, but tossing off her stringless boots she ran, she knew not whither.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Most Foolish Case of Suicide on Record.

Perhaps the most ridiculous suicide of the century is that perpetrated, the other day, by a romantic young Frenchman who saw the corpse of a beautiful but unknown girl in the Morgue. He at once became a prey to the wildest admiration of that corpse, and felt that life was not worth having while so beautiful a corpse remained inanimate. He therefore immediately proceeded to drown himself, in order that he might enjoy the felicity of lying, even in a blue and swollen state, on a contiguous slab in the Morgue that held the corpse he loved so well. His desire was gratified, and now if some young Frenchman, struck with admiration at his rash conduct, goes and does likewise, a fashion will be set which will weed Paris of its romantic lunatics to a very satisfactory extent.

☞ An agricultural paper says strawberry-beds may be protected from birds by running a wire along the walk to which a cat is chained. Her movements up and down the length of the wire will keep the birds away. Where there is no chain the wire can be run through the cat and heated to a temperature that will fill the cat with a longing to keep moving.

☞ It is remarked of a Massachusetts Congressman, of somewhat advanced years, who is announced as about to be married, that "his nose, in its downward course, nearly touches his mouth, while his chin turns up gracefully to meet his nose, until, as Quilp says, 'he can't eat green-corn from the ear because the kernels would go up his nose instead of in at his mouth.'"

LILLY THORPE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MOLLIE THOMAS.

Lilly Thorpe sat on a piazza of a fashionable hotel by the sea-side, and around her were a half-dozen of her admirers, all listening with delight to the pretty nonsense which fell from her lips, and all thinking her the most bewitching creature they had ever seen.

It was not that she was the most beautiful, but it was her manners and a nameless *something* that attracted men. She was a tiny creature, fair and graceful, with an innocent way of lifting her big blue eyes up to a person's face and looking at them intently while they were speaking, as though she was drinking in eagerly every word they uttered, (and of course that was flattering,) and the speaker felt in a good humor with himself to have such an appreciative listener; and then if she caught his glance bent upon her, she would drop her blue eyes with such a shy, timid look, and a faint blush would mantle her fair face.

She had a naive, artless way of saying the most unexpected things with all the simplicity of a child, and all the men went wild over her, and were ready to fall at her feet. She had been at the sea-side only a few days. She came on an evening train with an elderly gentleman, and when they went in to supper all eyes were bent on the fair little lady, who was by the side of the dark-looking man. Many conjectures were made as to their probable relationship by the crowd around. Some thought she was his daughter, and others his young wife, but more thought her not old enough to be a wife, for she looked almost a child. The next morning the gentleman left on an early train, and every one was surprised by the young lady's appearing at the breakfast-table alone. She was dressed in a simple morning toilet, and looked like a timid fawn as she hesitatingly took her seat at a table with several others. There were two ladies and three gentlemen near her, and seeing her all alone, one of the gentlemen spoke to her, excusing himself at the same time, and handed her some fruit. None of them knew exactly how it came about, but in a few minutes she was chatting pleasantly with the whole group. There had been nothing forward about her that even the ladies could object to, yet before they left the table she had told them that she was almost an invalid from the confinement of a boarding-school, and the physician had recommended sea-air as a restorative, and that she was all alone in the world, except her half-brother, who had brought her here, and his business was so pressing that he could not remain with her, but was compelled to return to New York that morning; but she added that he would come to see her as often as he could.

She did not seem to think that there was anything at all strange in her being left so, all alone in a vast hotel, without a lady friend; and when one of the ladies asked her if she did not feel afraid to be left so, she lifted her eyes with a wide stare, and asked in the most innocent way in the world,

"Afraid of what?"

At this the lady dropped her eyes, and said nothing more, for she was silenced; she had intended offering to take the little school-girl under her own care, for she knew it was not proper for her to be thus alone, but here she was rebuffed by the girl, who did not seem to know there was any need of a *chaperone*, and was not afraid among all these strangers.

The lady who had thus spoken, was Mrs. Blair, a handsome, middle-aged lady; and the others were Mr. Blair, her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Hastings, and a brother of Mrs. Blair, a young man of twenty-three years, named Henry Evans.

When they arose from the table Henry Evans offered his arm to the strange little lady, saying,

"Allow me to escort you from the room, Miss—" and then stopped.

She blushed a little, and gave a sweet rippling laugh that Henry thought was perfect music as she said,

"Lillian Thorpe is my name, but I am generally called Lilly."

Henry then introduced himself and the other ladies and gentlemen to her, and they all went out together.

There was nothing bold about Lillian Thorpe, but she had a wonderful faculty of making acquaintances with every one she met; and when she had been there three days, she had chatted with most of the ladies, in an easy and unconstrained manner, as though she had known them all her life; and had nearly all the men, married and single, in love with her.

Mr. Blair and Henry Evans were among the first to admire her; and Mrs. Blair petulantly said, "that since that silly little school-girl came, she had turned the heads of all the men, and they had forgotten that they had wives to demand their attention." Mr. Blair would tell his wife that she ought to be ashamed to be jealous of such a child, and say he only watched over her in a *fatherly* way, because she was so young and innocent that she needed a protector. After her first attempt, Mrs. Blair did not trouble Lillian Thorpe with any advice—for that young lady seemed to think herself in no need of any.

On this evening, the third day after her arrival, she sat on the piazza surrounded by a group of gentlemen, Mr. Blair, Henry Evans and several others. She was leaning back in a luxurious rocking-chair, when she exclaimed—

"Oh, dear, I wish I had a cushion for my feet, for they hardly touch the floor." Henry Evans soon placed one, and lifted the tiny feet on the cushions, and looked ready to fall down and worship her. A few moments after she said "I am so warm and have left my fan in my room." One of the gentlemen went hastily to procure one for her, and while he was gone, she said, "I feel feverish and my mouth is hot and dry, I wish I had some fruit or ices, it would be so refreshing." Mr. Blair left the group for a few moments, and when he returned he was followed by a servant bearing a waiter, loaded with fruit and ices.

Lilly raised her big blue eyes with a stare of surprise to Mr. Blair's face, and said, Oh, Mr. Blair, *did* you go and do that just Because I expressed a silly wish?" She shook her finger at him, and called him a *naughty* man, and then began eating the delicacies so kindly provided; and after this, she was always supplied by one or more of her admirers, with all kinds of dainties, because she was so delicate she could not eat the coarser food, such as was partaken of by common mortals, they said. And Lilly accepted all their attentions as her right, gave them sweet glances, and laid her hand in theirs, with such looks of innocent confidence, that each and every one thought himself the most highly favored of all men.

Nearly a week had passed when she and Henry Evans were promenading up and down one of the long piazzas, one warm night. They had been in the ball-room, and watched the dancers, but Lilly did not dance, such a thing was positively forbidden by her physician, she said, and then they withdrew to enjoy the fresh air.

Henry Evans determined to tell her of his love on this night, and know his fate, for he thought he would be the happiest man on earth, if he knew Lilly loved him, and would be his wife. He was just framing the words in his mind, with which to tell her that she was dearer than all else on earth when she said "I expect my brother to-morrow, and while he is here, not one of my gentlemen friends must speak to me, for he is jealous if any one looks at me." "Why?" Henry asked.

"Oh, I don't know, but I suppose he thinks I am such a child; too young for such attentions; so when he is near, he waits on me himself, and while he is here I *beg* you will not notice me, or let him know we are even acquainted." She said this hurriedly, and then looked up in his face with such a pleading look on her face which seemed so sweet and innocent, that Henry did what he had often longed to do—he stooped and kissed her. She drew from him with a little cry of surprise, and then said, "Mr. Evans, you ought not to do so, I am angry with you," and then she turned to go.

Henry Evans sprang forward and clasped her in his arms, and poured out his tale of love. She trembled violently while he was speaking, and when he had done, buried her face in her hands, and sobbed out: "Mr. Evans, I *can't* marry you, indeed I cannot, you know not what you ask. I can never, *never* marry you, and after this you must never talk so to me, and remember we can only be friends." And, while he listened in amazement to this passionate outburst, she wiped her eyes which were really red with weeping, and held out her hand so slender and fair, and he clasped the soft fingers in his, thinking that she had relented, and would not adhere to her cruel decision, but would return his love, and be his.

"Lilly, darling Lilly," he said, "why do you speak so to me?" and just as she was going to reply a tall form came near them, and she cowered behind Evans until he had passed by them. He noticed this, and asked her who it was.

She whispered, "My brother, and now I must go to my room, for he will look for me there, and must not miss me."

He held her a moment, "Stay Lilly, listen to me. I cannot live without you, may I not go to your brother to-morrow and tell him of our love, for you *do* love me," he said, looking down in her soft half-raised eyes, and he cannot refuse to give you to me, for I am of excellent family, and can provide for you a home of luxury."

Her face was wild with terror as she said, "No, no! you *must* not. I do *not* love you, Henry Evans, and if you were to go to him, he— he— would kill me," and with these wild words she slipped from him, and ran quickly away.

He gazed after her retreating form, wondering at her strange conduct, and thinking that this brother of hers must be a tyrant indeed, and he would like to cane him. Then he resolved, that come what would, he would rescue his darling from this man, for he believed she *did* love him, although she had denied it, for she had given him many tokens of her love, and he could not believe her guilty of flirting.

The following morning the dark gentleman entered the breakfast-room alone. Lilly was not present during the whole meal, and Henry Evans glanced angrily at the man who ruled his sweet sister with such a rod of iron. But he sought an interview with the stranger a few hours after.

"Excuse me," he said, handing the stranger his card; "but I presume I address Mr. Thorpe?" The stranger bowed stiffly. Henry had ventured on the name of Thorpe, for Lillian had never told him whether their names were the same or not; but he was right; and then he asked if Mr. Thorpe would grant him a few moments' interview with him in private, as he had a subject of great interest to himself on which he desired to speak. Mr. Thorpe turned into a private parlor, whither Henry followed him, and then stood waiting impatiently for Henry to make known his business.

The young man launched out boldly, for he thought nothing could be gained by modesty with such a man as this.

"You came here about a week ago, Mr. Thorpe, I believe, and brought with you a young lady, your sister, Miss Lilly Thorpe, and—"

"My *sister!* Young man, I brought with me *my wife, Mrs. Lillian Thorpe;* so you see you are laboring under a mistake.

Henry Evans turned pale. And had he been so basely deceived? He turned to leave the room.

"Pardon me, Mr. Evans, but you have not told me why you desired this interview."

Henry turned and said, "Excuse me, but I have changed my mind; it was a matter of no consequence," and left the room. His brain was in a whirl, and he felt that a walk on the sands would calm him.

In the meantime, Mr. Thorpe went up to his wife's room.

"Lillian," he said, "a young man by the name of Evans asked me to see him privately, and then began by speaking of you as my *sister, Miss* Thorpe."

"Did he?" she said.

"Yes. Now why was this? Were you acquainted with him? If so, why did he not know that you were *Mrs.* Thorpe?" He scrutinized her closely while he spoke, for there was in his mind a lurking distrust of his wife.

She betrayed no sign, but said:

"I have met Mr. Henry Evans a few times, and heard his name, but have no acquaintance with him. Indeed, I have seldom left my room, and so know none of the gentlemen, and few ladies, as I knew you would not like me to form the acquaintance of strangers. I'm sure I don't know how he learned my name, or what he could possibly have had to say to you about me."

Mr. Thorpe seemed satisfied by this remark, and was turning away, when he said: "I have only one day to spend with you, Lillian, and my home is very lonely; you are improving so fast, that I hope it will not be long before you are well enough to go home."

She spoke eagerly.

"Oh, take me home with you, or else convey me somewhere else, for I am tired of this stupid place, where I have to stay all alone so much."

She pouted out her pretty lips, and he bent and kissed her, thinking what a treasure his wife was.

"You shall go home with me," he said, "and invite some of your friends to visit you, so you will not lack companionship."

She remained in her room until they left on the night train, for she dared not run the risk of meeting Henry Evans. When they arrived at home, she wrote to her Cousin Fanny Holmes the following letter:

"DEAREST FAN,—I am back here in the city again—have been down to the sea-side, and could not resist my old delight of flirting, and so like to have gotten into a scrape, but I managed cleverly enough at last, and so George did not find it out. I want you to come to see me, and I'll tell you all about it. At present I will only give you a few facts. You see I still look as babyish as ever, and can readily pass for a fifteen-year old girl; my two years of married life don't make me look any older. When we got to N——, George had to leave me and come home to attend to some important business, and on leaving he made me promise to remain in my room most of the time until his return. I promised, of course, for you know how jealous he is. The next day I went down and began to enjoy myself, and then I found no one had any idea I was married, so I passed myself off as *Miss* Lilly Thorpe—made eyes at the men, looked unspeakable things, got them all in love, and then ordered them around quite royally. Wished for good things *aloud* and got them, and enjoyed myself hugely, so much more than I should if George had been there, and the dear old stupid thinks I was in my room all the time pining for him. Come soon, for I am dying to tell you all about the last scrape, and how narrowly I escaped.

"Your loving LILLY."

When Henry Evans returned from his walk, he saw a group of ladies assembled on the piazza and joined them. They immediately asked him what had become of Miss Thorpe, as none of them had seen her all the morning, and as he was her devoted they presumed that he knew of her whereabouts. He said "*Mrs.* Thorpe has not made her appearance to-day. I presume she is employed entertaining her *husband*, who came on the train last night."

The ladies lifted their hands in amazement, and wanted him to tell them how he knew she was married; but he was still too much hurt by having been so basely deceived to converse longer on the subject, but told them that he saw their names on the register, and thinking it a mistake, asked Mr. Thorpe what relation the young lady was to him, and was told his *wife*. Of the real truth they were ignorant.

The ladies declared that they never had liked her, and knew she was a deceitful little minx from the first, and they hoped the men would learn some sense by this and not run after the next silly little flirt they saw.

Mrs. Blair gave Mr. Blair a private curtain lecture, and since then he is never seen near a doll-faced beauty no matter how charming she may be.

Henry Evans soon got over his love, and a few years later married a good wife.

THE THREE BELLES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ANNA MORRIS.

Three Belle Conways! Only to think of it! And all residing in one small town. Of course it made confusion worse confounded. Everybody got everybody else's packages, messages, letters, and, most dire calamity, beaux.

What ever possessed my father and his two brothers, to each and all, name a daughter for their mother, I cannot imagine. It was certainly carrying their filial respect and affection too far, as we, the three victims, could testify. In vain we tried to make some distinction in our names. We each inserted a middle letter, but no one would or could remember it. We spelled our names respectively: Bella, Belle and Bel, and entreated our friends and correspondents to do likewise, but that was equally useless.

All former trials, however, were as naught compared with one which had now befallen us. We had received a real love-letter containing a veritable *affer*, and we didn't know to whom it belonged.

"I am sure it is mine, girls," laughed Uncle James' Belle, shaking back her chestnut curls, and with an arch glance of her brown eyes in the direction of Uncle Henry's Bella, who sat calmly perusing the epistle in question, and who upon finishing it rose with "*La Grande Duchesse*" air of hers, saying coolly, "There can be no question about the matter. Mr. Clarendon was very attentive to me during the summer." With which decision she moved to the mirror and began re-arranging the coronet of jetty braids that so well adorned her regal beauty.

For my part I said nothing. What *could* I say? I had neither Bella's beauty, nor Belle's wit and vivacity. I was small and slight, with blue eyes and fair ringlets. How could any one notice me when in the company of my brilliant cousins?

To be sure I *had* thought Edward Clarendon liked me. He had been very kind and attentive during his sojourn in our village; but perhaps no more so than any gentlemen would be to any lady, especially if he expected to be her cousin some time.

"Why don't you claim the wonderful letter, Bluebell?" inquired Belle. That was always her pet name for me. "There you sit, as meek and quiet as if your name were not Bel Conway, and you had not as good a right to it as either of us."

"How can you be so ridiculous, Belle?" asked Bella. "I tell you the letter undoubtedly belongs to me. I shall answer it this evening."

"What shall you say?" demanded Belle suddenly. "At least you might tell us that, if you are going to take away our lover so unceremoniously."

"Your lover!" sneered Bella. "The idea of you children having lovers."

"Children!" echoed Belle. "Not much more children than yourself, I fancy. You are eighteen, but we are seventeen; at least I am, and little Bluebell here will be, her next birthday. No, no, Bella. You can't have that letter all to yourself. I am going to answer it too. Mr. Clarendon was just as attentive to me as he was to you, played croquet with me, took me out driving and and boating, and danced with me at the picnic. By the by, he escorted Bluebell to the pic-nic; I do believe that letter is for her, and not for either of us.

"You answer it, won't you, Bel?" she continued, turning to me.

"Oh! no, indeed," I answered quickly. "Why should I answer it? It is doubtless for you or Bella."

"Do you think Mr. Clarendon knew of the different ways in which we spell our name?" I asked, taking up the envelope, which was addressed to Miss Belle Conway.

"Of course he did?" exclaimed Belle mischievously, "and therefore the letter is mine! Now let me see—what shall I say? Ah! that reminds me, Bella, you didn't tell me what *you* thought of writing when you claimed my property. Was it 'No, I thank you, sir,'" she said, "or

'To change the name and not the letter,
You change for the worse and not the better.'"

"Don't be absurd, Belle," responded Bella. "It is not necessary for me to tell you what reply I intend to make.

"'*Intend to make!*' She still persists in claiming this precious document!" cried Belle in mock-tragic tones, "but never, never will I part with it. Now, listen to me, girls," she continued, with a sudden change of voice and manner. "I'll tell you what we will do. We'll just serve him as we used to do the old committee-men at school examination. Don't you recollect when they would ask 'Miss Conway' a question how we would all answer? And then, when thinking to make all plain, one would add, 'Miss *Belle* Conway,' and still the triple reply came, how confounded they all looked? Now, let us each write an answer to Mr. Clarendon, signing our names as we always sign them, and then the gentleman may specify which he meant. It was, to say the least, careless in him, when he knew the remarkable similarity of our names."

Bella would not hear to the plan. Belle commenced arguing the matter, as they always and invariably argued every matter, and I sat lost in my own thoughts.

"Could I write such a letter? And what should I say in it?"

Somehow as a vision of Mr. Clarendon's frank, manly face rose before me, with a remembrance of his deep, rich voice and courteous manners, it seemed to me that had my name been something different, and thus that letter come to me alone, I could have answered it without much difficulty; but to write a reply to be read and criticised by my cousins, or to be seen by him if he coveted epistle," she said, "and then for our answers."

Suiting the action to the word, she snatched up the letter, and hastily running her eyes over the contents, tossed it to Bella. She read it quietly as before, and handed it to me without a word.

It was the first time it had been in my hands. Belle had taken it from the office, and read it aloud. As I read the grave, earnest avowal, the dark eyes of the writer seemed looking into mine—into my very soul—and I knew that whichever of us it might be whom he loved, it was I alone of the three, who loved him! Surely my cousins did not, or they could never discuss the affair so freely.

I laid down the letter, and in silence, for they were in my room. I produced writing materials, and we began our task.

Bella wrote quietly and gravely, and soon finished and sealed her note. Belle laughed softly over her letter, jumped up declaring she didn't know what to say, and finally scribbled something hastily, and folded it, exclaiming,

"Come, Bluebell, haven't you finished?"

I had been seated a little apart from the others, pondering deeply as to what I could say that would not compromise me. As Belle spoke, a bright idea came—and writing just four words, I signed my name; drew an envelope from the desk, and slipping in my note, sealed and addressed it.

"Now who shall post them?" inquired Belle.

"We will go together, and each post her own," answered Bella.

And to this we agreed, and sallied forth.

Scarcely had we deposited our missives in the letter-box, when Belle exclaimed,

"There, now, girls, haven't we made a muss of it! How have we bettered the matter? They are all signed 'Belle Conway;' and if Mr. Clarendon doesn't know of our respective modes of orthography, how will he be able to distinguish between us, any more than before?"

I caught a mischievous twinkle in her eyes, that assured me she had taken care of herself. But Bella turned ashy pale as she answered, faintly,

"Of course we were careful not to commit ourselves."

She had! I was confident of it then, and grew more so as the days wore on, and the expected answer did not arrive, for she became almost ill with anxiety. Still I was confident it was not from love, but from mortified pride.

A week passed, and Belle declared her belief that Mr. Clarendon had been so entirely overcome by finding that he had offered himself to, and been accepted by, *three* girls, that he had either quitted the country, or committed suicide.

That evening's mail, however, brought the anxiously looked-for epistle. As before, Belle got it; and as before, we were in my room.

"It is addressed to 'Miss B. Conway,' this time! Worse and worse! Who shall open it?" she cried, as she waved it above her head.

I durst not move or speak, lest they should see how I trembled, for within this week I had grown to realize more and more how bitter would be my disappointment if I found either of my cousins the favored one.

Bella half rose, as if to take the letter, then, suddenly changing her mind, sank back in her chair, while the color mounted in rich waves to her very brow.

"What, no demands! Then I'll read it myself—*to myself*, I have a great mind to add—since no one else seems to care to claim it;" and she laughingly broke the seal, and drew out the note.

"Why, what's this?" she exclaimed, in astonishment, as something else fell from the envelope to the floor. "A photograph! His own, I suppose?" stooping to pick it up. "No, it is not! It's a lady's," turning it to the light. "Why, it's yours, Bluebell Conway! How came he by this?" she cried, flying up to me. "You are a sly little thing, Bel! Did you give him this, and know all the time that it was you who were meant?" and she shook me playfully as she spoke.

"Indeed, I know nothing of the sort," I began, conscious that my face was covered with tell-tale blushes; but Bella interrupted with a cold, sharp—

"Please read the note, Belle, or hand it to me."

"I'll read it myself, thank you," answered Belle, saucily, and opening the sheet began at once:

"DEAR MISSES CONWAY—"

"Oh, dear," she commented, "he is actually going to court all three of us."

"Be quiet, Belle, and go on," commanded Bella.

"How can I do both?" inquired Belle, but resumed:

"I have just received your notes, having been absent from the city for some days. I thank you all for your kind treatment of my blunder, and am grateful for the three photographs. The one I enclose is the likeness of *the* Miss Conway to whom I intended to address my former letter. May I hope for an answer from her?

"Most truly and respectfully,

"EDWARD CLARENDON."

"Three photographs! What does he mean? Who sent him photographs? I didn't, for one. Bel Conway, what have you been doing?" she cried, seizing my hands away from my face.

I was trying to realize the truth that it was I who was the beloved and chosen one; and at first I hardly comprehended what Belle asked, but when she repeated her question, I replied, somewhat timidly, glancing at Bella,

"I sent him our photographs that I had in my desk, that there need be no further blunder."

"You did! What a fine idea! And what did you write?" demanded Belle.

"Will you tell me the contents of your letter, if I tell you mine?" I asked, laughingly.

"Yes, I would just as soon as not," was the ready response.

"Well, I said: 'Which did you mean?' and signed 'Bel Conway.' Wasn't that short and sweet enough? Now tell yours."

"Oh, I thanked him for the honor, but thought I was not quite ready to emigrate to Utah, which you know he would be obliged to do with three wives."

"For shame, Belle! How could you?" said Bella, speaking for the first time.

"Oh, I dare say you did just as bad; confess now what you wrote," cried Belle, gaily.

"We were not to tell each other," answered Bella, coldly, and an embarrassing silence seemed gathering around us, which we were all glad to have broken by the entrance of Bridget, our good-natured Irish girl, who had not been long with us.

"Sure, Miss, there's a strange jintleman down-stairs asking for ye."

"For me?" said I, wondering who it could be.

"Miss Bel Conway was what he said," replied Bridget.

"That means any or all of us," cried Belle. "Come on, girls! Let's all go down together, or no," she added, "we'll go in Indian file, each assuming on her entrance that she is the individual inquired for. You run along Bel," and she pushed me out of the room. "I'll come so soon as I give my hair a touch."

I descended rather slowly, not feeling much in the mood for visitors. To my utter astonishment on entering the parlor, Edward Clarendon came eagerly forward to greet me.

"Dearest Bel—Miss Conway—I could not wait for an answer to my letter, and I feared it might in some way fall into other hands, and be delayed, so I followed it at once, to know my fate from your own lips."

I had little time to answer, though apparently he was satisfied with my reply, when Belle burst into the room, closely followed by Bella.

Their looks of surprise were ludicrous, but quickly recovering herself, Belle came forward, saying saucily, "Ah, Mr. Clarendon, are you already *en route* for Utah? I see by Bel's looks that she has decided to accompany you, so I wish you both *bon voyage* with all my heart;" and my warm-hearted cousin shook hands with our visitor, and kissed me most lovingly.

Bella had seemed to hesitate for a moment, but now came forward, and gracefully and cordially offered her congratulations.

A few jesting remarks put us all at our ease, though I fancy Bella read my thoughts, for as she bade me good night, she whispered, "Don't look so troubled at me, Bluebell. I am not disappointed, only mortified that I *wrote a rejection*, when I had not been asked."

Edward insisted on a speedy marriage. It was too dangerous courting, he said, when there were three ladies ready to share the honors, so to-day there are but *two* Belle Conways.

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(Any of the following works—or any other book—will be forwarded by mail by the proprietors of THE POST on receipt of the regular retail price. *Address H. Peterson & Co., 319 Walnut St., Philadelphia.*

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THE LIFE AND STRANGE SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE, of York, as related by himself. By DANIEL DE FOE, with, an autobiographical sketch of the author and a life of Alexander Selkirk, by whose residence on the island of Juan Fernandez the work was suggested. Published by Hubbard Bros., Philadelphia and Boston. There are always young people coming on to whom the story of Robinson Crusoe is new, and of intense interest, and we have seen no edition for many years more elegantly gotten up and more suitable for a holiday gift book. The paper is fine, the type large and clear, and the illustrations are the work of the very best artists. Price—English cloth, richly ornamented, $2 50; same style, gilt edges, $3; half Turkey morocco, $5. Sold by subscription.

PHYSICS AND POLITICS; or, Thoughts on the Application of the Principles of "Natural Selection" and "Inheritance" to Political Society. By WALTER BAGEHOT, Esq., author of "The English Constitution." Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

LITTLE BOBTAIL; or the Wreck of the Penobscot. By OLIVER OPTIC, with thirteen illustrations. No. 1 of the "Yacht Club Series." Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price $1.

SPICY.—A Novel. By Mrs. MARTHA J. LAMB. With illustrations. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price $1.

WINNING HIS SPURS; or, Henry Morton's First Trial. By Elijah Kellogg. Illustrated. No 4 of the "Whispering Pine Series." Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE for January, 1873. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for January, 1873. Published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

THE ANTHEM CHOIR: Consisting of Anthems, Choruses, Opening and Closing Pieces adapted to all occasions. Twenty-two of the best anthem writers of this country have contributed to this work, the whole being well adapted to the wants of choirs, conventions, musical associations, singing-classes, and the home circle. By W. A. OGDEN, author of the "Silver Song." Published by W. W. Whitney, Toledo, Ohio; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada. Single copies $1.25; $10.50 per dozen.

All for Love.

WHAT A WEST VIRGINIA DAMSEL DID.

Something over a year ago a young man, a short distance below Wheeling, West Virginia, was arrested for horse-stealing; and a girl, named Sarah G. Winemiller, who was deeply attached to him, wanted to share his jail life. This being refused, and she being almost crazed with fear that he would be sent to the penitentiary, determined to go with him. So she set fire to a school-house, that was also used as a place of worship. For this arson she was arrested, convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the penitentiary. When "Sarah's young man's" trial came on, the charge against him fell to the ground. There was nothing in it, so Sarah went to the penitentiary alone, "all for love." On the 23d of November, Governor Jacobs signed her pardon, and she was soon set free to go and find her lover, for whom she had suffered so much.

☞ The little girls who go about with baskets and beg for cold victuals, are very persistent in St. Louis, and call regularly. The Republican says: "One day when they thus called at Mrs. Smith's, guests were being entertained, but one of the girls, nothing abashed, marched up to table and inquired if there were any cold victuals. Mrs. Smith, slightly vexed at the impudence of the girl, replied, 'No, they are all hot.' The girl went out on her dignity, and her companion, who had remained outside, seeing the empty basket, exclaimed in surprise, 'Didn't she give you anything?' 'No, replied the other, 'she was sassy,' a remark which was heard by the company at the table, greatly to their amusement."

☞ All little boys who are going skating this winter, are hereby warned that they should in no case attempt to wear their skates upon their tongues. They cannot use them to advantage there, and the result of the experiment is sure to be unpleasant. A little urchin at South Bend, Ind., lately applied his tongue to the iron of his skate, and it took a long while to induce the two to part company, and the skate finally had the best of it, retaining about a square inch of skin on its cold surface.

☞ A Jackson, Mich., family consists of eight Furlongs. The head of it proposes to erect a family monument and call it a "mile stone."

☞ Housekeepers should not scold, these cold mornings, if the milkman comes late. They should remember the time and labor consumed in thawing out pumps before the vender can start out. The milkman's life is not always as happy and bright as a Summer's day.

THERE was a man in our town
And he was wondrous wise,
He had a pain from ear to ear,
Another between his eyes;
And when he saw he had Catarrh,
With all his might and main,
He purchased SAGE'S REMEDY,
And has his health again.

It is sold by druggists everywhere. 6t2.

WM. D. BALDWIN, Esq., of Washington, D. C., says his wife has used a GROVER & BAKER SEWING MACHINE for eleven years, during which time it has never needed a dollar's worth of repairs, except once when broken by an accident in moving; and that it has done all sorts of work in the most satisfactory manner.

DR. RADWAY'S

Sarsaparillian Resolvent,

THE GREAT BLOOD PURIFIER.

FOR THE CURE OF ALL

CHRONIC DISEASES, SCROFULA, ULCERS,

CHRONIC RHEUMATISM, ERYSIPELAS,

KIDNEY, BLADDER, AND LIVER

COMPLAINTS, DYSPEPSIA,

AFFECTIONS OF THE LUNGS AND THROAT;

PURIFIES THE BLOOD,

RESTORING HEALTH AND VIGOR;

CLEAR SKIN AND BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION

SECURED TO ALL.

Sold by Druggists. Price $1 per Bottle.

DR. RADWAY'S

PERFECT PURGATIVE PILLS.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, headache, constipation, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, bilious fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Warranted to effect a positive cure.

Price 25 cents per box. Sold by Druggists.

DR. RADWAY & CO., 32 Warren St., New York.
nov2-tf

A CARD.

To all who are suffering from the errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, &c., I will send a recipe that will cure you, *free of charge*. This noble remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send a self-addressed envelope to the Rev. JOSEPH T. INMAN, Station D., New York City. oct12-1y

PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

BEAUTIFUL NEW PREMIUM CHROMO.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" call the attention of the ladies to their Magazine, as being just what a Lady's Magazine should be. Edited by a Lady, nothing but what is of the most refined and elevating character ever is admitted to its pages. Its Engravings, its Fashions, its Stories all bear evidence of the same refined and cultivated taste, which has endeared it to thousands of readers.

It will continue to publish Serials, Short Stories, Poetry, &c., from its old list of talented contributors. Among the Serials we may announce:—

THE MASTER OF GREYLANDS.
By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Lady Andinnian's Trial," etc.

UNA AND HER PRINCE.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "Una and Her Lions," etc.

A GIRL'S ROMANCE.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquetta," etc.

A NOVELET.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story." "Kenburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

FASHIONS, FANCY WORK, ETC.

Fine Engravings of the Fashions will represent the latest styles in Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Hats, Headdresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS.

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character, embracing pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections. These choice and elegant Engravings are a special feature of this Magazine, and should entitle it to the preference over all others.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most popular Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth double the price of the Magazine.

SPLENDID PREMIUMS

Sewing Machines, Plated Ware, Gold Chains, &c.

Those desiring to get up Lists of subscribers to the Lady's Friend, will be well compensated. The list of Premiums is the same as for the Post.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chrome of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, and which has all the rich and glowing colors of a fine oil painting—will be sent to the getter-up of every club, and, *under special rates*, to every subscriber. This Chromo is copyrighted, and the regular price of it is Five Dollars. It cannot be obtained for less than that price, except in connection with "The Lady's Friend," or "The Saturday Evening Post." It is twelve by fifteen inches in size.

TERMS—With the Chromo—Always in Advance.

One copy of The Lady's Friend, and one copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	$2.50
One copy of the Lady's Friend, one of "The Saturday Evening Post," and one Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	3.00
Four copies of the Lady's Friend and four Chromos (and one Chromo gratis),	8.00
Eight copies of The Lady's Friend, and eight Chromos, (and one copy each of the Magazine and Chromo gratis, for the sender of the club),	16.00
Additional subscribers may be added to the above clubs at	2.00

☞ These clubs can be made up of THE LADY'S FRIEND and "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST" conjointly, if 50 cents is added for each number of THE POST taken.

TERMS—Without the Chromo—Always in Advance.

Without the Chromo, we will send the Magazine at the old rates. One copy for $2.00. Four copies for $6.00. Eight copies (and one gratis to the sender of the Club) for $12.00. All additional at $1.50. Copies of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST can be taken in these Clubs at $2.00 apiece, which is now THE POST'S lowest Club price. The Chromo of "Little Samuel" will be sent to the *sender* of each Club, as a special reward for his or her trouble; and to each club-subscriber for one dollar extra.

One copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) and one of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) for $4.50.

OUR STEEL ENGRAVINGS.—Any one entitled a Chromo, may take in its place, if he so desires, a copy of either of our handsome Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

☞ Those desirous of getting up a Club, or a Premium List, shall have a copy of the Magazine sent to them gratis. They would also find it advisable to remit one dollar, for which we will send a copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel" in addition. They must state expressly, however, that they wish the Chromo for this purpose, or else it will not be furnished. If the Chromo gets seriously injured in canvassing for subscribers another will be sent to replace it.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded *in all cases*, to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo.

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single numbers of THE LADY'S FRIEND, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DEC. 28, 1872.

TERMS---Always in Advance.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, will be sent as a Premium to every single ($3.00) subscriber, who sends on ten cents to pay the expense of mailing, &c. It will also be sent to the getter-up of every Club.

RATES:

Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($3.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." [Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.]

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) and One of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) for $4.50. Or, if the Premium Chromo or an Engraving is desired in addition, $5.10.

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST (with the CHROMO, or one of our STEEL ENGRAVINGS,) and a copy of "PEMBERTON; OR, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO" (postage paid), for $4.50.

One copy of PEMBERTON (postage paid) $1.75.

TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

TERMS OF CLUBS. For $3.00 we will send four copies of THE POST for one year to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending the Club shall be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

For $16 we will send eight copies to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending this Club shall be entitled to a copy *free*, and to a copy also of the Premium Chromo, or to either of our Premium engravings.

The senders of Clubs can afterwards add single copies at $3.00 each.

Any club-subscriber wishing the Chromo or an Engraving must remit *one dollar extra*.

The above Clubs may be composed partly of THE POST and partly of THE LADY'S FRIEND, if desired. The subscriptions to The Lady's Friend can be taken at $1.50 apiece, instead of $2.00. Thus four copies of THE POST, and four of THE LADY'S FRIEND will be sent for $14, and in the same proportion all through.

Special offers to those who wish to make up premium lists, will be found under that head.

CLUBS OR LISTS WITH CHROMO. Those desirous of getting up clubs with the Chromo, or Premium Lists, should remit one dollar, for which we will send them a copy of the Chromo. When the Club or List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another will be sent to replace it.

☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

WE WILL SEND YOU ANY NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE YOU WISH, IN CONNECTION WITH THE POST, AT A REDUCED PRICE—as follows: Any Paper or Magazine the regular price of which is $1.00 at 87 cts.; regular price $2.00 at $1.75; regular price $2.50 at $2.25; regular price $3.00 at $2.62; regular price $4.00 at $3.50; regular price $5.00 at $4.50.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ When additions are made to clubs, the new subscriptions must begin and end at the same time as the original club.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded, *in all cases*, where subscribers are entitled to and wish the Chromo or an engraving, to pay the expense of mailing.

BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are entreated to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

Address H. PETERSON & Co.,
No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.
SINGLE COPIES 5 Cents.

ANOTHER NEW SERIAL.

In the first paper of January we shall begin a finely written novelette, entitled,

RAVENSWOOD;
OR,
THE RAFTSMEN OF THE DELAWARE.

BY BURR THORNBURY,

Author of "Skale the Scout," "The Tory Brothers," "Agnes Ayre," Etc., Etc.

The scenes are laid in the midst of the wild and romantic country of the upper Delaware, with which section the author is himself intimately acquainted. It is with great satisfaction we offer our readers this spirited story.

A FEW WORDS.

In this last paper of the year, we would take occasion to respond to the many kind and friendly letters we have recently received from our subscribers.

With hundreds of them, and they subscribers often for twenty and thirty years, there is no paper like THE POST. And we often receive letters from those who have not seen or heard of THE POST for many years, saying that they had just lighted upon a stray number of it, and after commenting upon the interest with which they hung over its columns in their youth, ordering their names placed upon its subscription books.

These things are of course very pleasant to us. For our part, we have tried to keep up with the age, and we think THE POST is as full of life and variety as any paper published. Of course there is great competition nowadays, and every paper needs the warm support of all its friends to hold its own against the inroads of others. And to make a paper that shall receive the large support which is now requisite to uphold a leading sheet, and yet not pander to coarse and sensual instincts, is not so easy a matter as many suppose. It requires a watchful eye to keep from running into the realm of dulness on the one side, and that of wickedness on the other.

Still we think we succeed pretty well on the whole—and, if our readers think so too, we trust they will say a good word for us to their friends whenever they can. We do want to double our list, and spend even more money on THE POST the ensuing year than during the last. And, whether we shall do it or not, depends in a very large degree upon those who already are our subscribers—and who we hope, in conclusion, will not only renew as their subscriptions expire, but persuade as many of their friends as possible to send on their names likewise.

OIL PAINTINGS AND CHROMOS.

Oil paintings are generally designed to be hung on a wall, and thus looked at from a little distance, and therefore are not painted with that minuteness of finish which is suitable for a picture or small engraving that is to be held directly before the eyes. Bring even the more celebrated paintings near to the eyes, and you will discern blotches of color and shading that will seem rough and inharmonious. But these are often necessary to the beauty and effect of the artist's design—as you will see when the eye is put at the proper distance to take in the picture as a whole.

With a chromo which aims to have the merits of an oil painting, the same must necessarily hold good. It must be looked at as a whole, not examined closely and minutely, as if it were a watch-paper.

We write this as we recently received a letter from a lady, in which while expressing her general admiration of our chromo of "Little Samuel," she adverted to one or two things which she thought defects—but which merely appeared to her as such, owing to her subjecting it to a test it was not intended to undergo.

OUR PREMIUMS.—We have received the following acknowledgment from Mr. D. W. Bruce, a gentleman residing in Washington City:—

"This is to certify that I have this day received from Deacon & Peterson as a Premium, a Silver Hunting Case Watch, manufactured by the National Watch Company of Elgin, Illinois.

"The Chromos and Engravings have been duly received by the subscribers on my List. Every subscriber is pleased, and I am pleased; and I shall try and forward another List by the first of January. You will please except my heartfelt thanks."

SPLENDID LIST OF PREMIUMS!

[We offer the following splendid list of Premiums, because we wish to increase our subscription list—and therefore mean to pay well those who will aid us in so doing. We prefer this mode to the usual expensive system of advertising.]

Mark! Every Subscriber in a Premium List is entitled to one of our handsome Steel Plate Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," "Washington at Mount Vernon," or to the Beautiful Chromo of

"LITTLE SAMUEL;"

representing the Child-Prophet as he is aroused from slumber by the voice of the Lord, (I. Samuel; Chapter 3.) This Chromo would be sold in the stores for $3. It is twelve by fifteen inches in size. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST," and "THE LADY'S FRIEND." The subscribers to THE LADY'S FRIEND may be taken at $2.50 instead of $3.00.

For 50 subscribers, at $3 each,	a Silver-plated Tea Set, including Coffee Pot, worth		$50.00
For 40	"	"	a Lady's solid gold, long Opera Chain—with tassels and handsomely enamelled slides with Pearl settings, worth	40.00
For 40	"	"	a Lady's Fine Gold Watch, 18 karat, full jeweled, detached lever, worth	50.00
			or a Grover & Baker's Sewing Machine, worth	55.00
			or a 4-octave Melodeon, worth	60.00
For 30	"	"	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver Watch, worth	30.00
For 30	"	"	a Novelty Printing Press, worth	30.00
For 20	"	"	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver watch, worth	20.00
For 14	"	"	a Doty's Washing Machine, worth	14.00
For 12	"	"	a Silver-plated Cake Basket, worth	12.00
			or a Silver-plated Ice Pitcher, worth	12.00
			or a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, worth	12.00
For 10	"	"	a Silver-plated Castor, worth	10.00
For 9	"	"	a set of Parlor Billiards, worth	6.00
			or a Set of Croquet, maple, worth	10.00
			or a Set of "Le Cercle," (the new field game,) polished maple, worth	10.00
			or a Universal Clothes Wringer, worth	9.00
For 5	"	"	a Three-quart Ice Cream Freezer, (Packer,) worth	4.50
For 4	"	"	a Set of Six Croquet Balls, Tilton's Ebonite, worth	4.00
For 4	"	"	a set of Parlor Quoits, worth	3.00
For 2	"	"	One copy of "Pemberton; or, One Hundred Years Ago," by H. Peterson; bound in cloth, worth	1.75

GOLD PENS AND HOLDERS.

For 5 subscribers at $3 each,	No. 6 Pen, Solid Silver Extension Case, worth		5.00
For 6	"	"	Business, or No. 7 Pen, Telescopic Holder, (can be carried safely in vest pocket,) worth	4.50

The above Gold Pens are made by E. S. Johnson & Co., New York, and are of unequaled finish, elasticity and durability. They have been sold by first-class dealers for the past twenty years.

PEN AND POCKET KNIVES.

For 3 subscribers at $3 each,	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 4 blades, Shell Handle, worth,		2.50
	or Two Pruning Knives, 1 blade, Cocoa Handle, worth, each		1.25
For 5	"	"	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 5 blades, Pearl Handle, Octagon, worth	4.50

PATENT HARD RUBBER HANDLE TABLE KNIVES.

For 3 subscribers, at $3 each,	Half-a-dozen Table Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Concave Bolster, Ivory tip, worth		4.00
For 4	"	"	Half-a-dozen Dessert Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Ivory tip, worth	2.75
For 5	"	"	One Pair Beef and Game Carvers, Ivory tip, worth	3.75

HEAVY SILVER PLATED KNIVES.

For 12 subscribers, at $3 each,	Half-a-dozen Silver Plated Table Knives, Heavy Oval Ivory Handles, worth		10.00
For 10	"	"	Half-a-dozen Silver Plated Dessert Knives, Heavy Oval Ivory Handles, worth	6.00
For 3	"	"	One Pair Carvers, Heavy Oval Superfine Ivory Handle, worth	1.00

HEAVILY SILVER PLATED SPOONS AND FORKS.

For 3 subscribers, at $3 each,	One Set Tea Spoons,	Extra Plate,	worth				2.25
For 5	"	"	"	"	Triple	"	"		4.00
For 3	"	"	"	" Dessert	"	Extra	"	"		4.25
For 6	"	"	"	"	"	Triple	"	"		6.75
For 7	"	"	"	" Table	"	Extra	"	"		6.50
For 10	"	"	"	"	"	Triple	"	"		8.25
For 8	"	"	"	" Forks,		Extra	"	"		6.50
For 10	"	"	"	"		Triple	"	"		8.25
For 4	"	"	A pair of Solid Oval Ivory Handle Butter Knives, Silver Plated, worth							2.00
For 6	"	"	One Child's Set, consisting of Pearl Handle Silver Plated Knife and Fork and Spoon in a fine Morocco Case, worth							3.50

☞ The above named goods are made at the celebrated manufactory of the Meriden Cutlery Co., Meriden, Conn., and by Reed & Barton, New York City, and are warranted A No. 1 in every particular. Premiums will be forwarded as rapidly as possible in their order. A set of Spoons, Forks, &c., is always half-a-dozen pieces.

OR ANYTHING ELSE!

Any person wishing articles not on the above list, will please let us know what they prefer, and we will arrange to furnish them. ☞ *On lists of four or over, a commission of twenty per cent., (one-fifth the amount,) may be retained, if the money is preferred to the Premium.* ☜

REMARKS.

Everything offered in our list of Premiums is guaranteed to be an excellent article. The valuation is simply the usual retail price of the article in Philadelphia and New York. By means of purchasing at the best sources, and at wholesale prices, and giving advertising in return, we are enabled to offer those splendid inducements. Our only object is to increase our circulation—giving those who help us to do this the benefit of the Premiums.

☞ The lists may be made up for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST exclusively at $3.00, or for THE LADY'S FRIEND exclusively at $2.00, or partly for one and partly the other, as is desired. Both old and new subscribers may be counted in the lists of four or over. In lists of two or three, all must be *new* subscribers. Either of our Steel Engravings may be substituted for the Chromo.

The Canvasser for a list for Premiums would do well to take with him a copy of THE POST, a copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND, and one of our beautiful Premium Chromos. They will be sent to those desirous of making up lists (and to those only) for $1.00. When the List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another Chromo will be sent in its place, or the dollar may be deducted from the amount due us.

The articles will be sent by express, or as ordered. Nothing will be charged for packing or boxing. The freight, however, must be paid by the receiver of the Premium.

Subscriptions (with the money) should be remitted as fast as obtained, that the subscribers may receive their papers, magazines, and Chromos at once.

EVERY NAME DESIGNED FOR A PREMIUM LIST MUST BE SO MARKED WHEN SENT IN.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

Address H. PETERSON & CO.,
No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

NOTE.—The price for which we offer THE POST and our beautiful CHROMO (or a Steel Engraving) to our yearly subscribers is just the same that all the first-class Literary Weeklies charge FOR THEIR PAPERS ALONE.

In other words, those who subscribe to The Post will get not only (to speak modestly) as good a paper, but either of our beautiful Premium Pictures besides.

Those that canvass for new subscribers should not forget this fact.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

THE CHARM OF MANNER.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Somewhere lately I read a most beautifully high-sounding and highfalutin paragraph about it. How the most irresistibly and overwhelmingly fascinating attraction in life was this unexplainable charm of manner. How it was more than beauty, more than wealth, more than genius, more than education, more than faith, hope, charity, nature and revelation. How some folks were homely as a mud chimney, and poor as a beggar, and not over bright either, and yet wherever they turned their faces, all men, and women too, laid themselves at their feet. How the hearts of folks were drawn right out of their breasts, in spite of their teeth, by the mysterious and miraculous power of the charm of manner. Oh! it was a wonderful matter, was the charm of manner!

Now, I have implicit faith in the newspapers. I always believe everything I read, and more too. But just then it occurred to me that up to that time I hadn't particularly noticed the charm of manner in anybody that I remembered. Not a single charm. So I said: I'll watch for it among folks when I go anywhere next time, and when I find it, put a peg down. The next place I went was the matinee, one Saturday afternoon. There was a large and fashionable audience at the matinee. I immediately cast my eagle eyes over the elegant audience, to see if I could detect the charm of manner anywhere. The house was packed like a box of sardines, and I was late. I am always late. I dare say if I were to be sent for to go to Heaven, I shouldn't be quite ready when the time came. It's a constitutional defect. I am scolded every day of my life for it, and the more I am scolded, the later I get to be. As I said, it was late, and we had to go to the gallery, and I began looking with all my might for the charm of manner. We meekly took a back seat, as was fitting folks who were geese enough to be late. And this is what we saw: (We went to see the play, you know.) Our eyes were favored with magnificent rear views of the dressed-up human form divine in every possible and imaginable shape, size and attitude. There was the rear view tragic, the ditto comic, and the human form slab-sided and awkward. And upon my word of honor, that was every blessed object we could see. We couldn't hear so much as a shadow of a whisper. And we went to hear the play, you know. We didn't pay our money to go in and look at people's backs. We had backs at home.

The elegant and charming ladies on the front tier of seats stood up, so as to see, like a lot of bad boys at a circus; the elegant and accomplished female ladies of the second tier, planted their nice clean little feet upon the velvet cushions of the seats, so as to get even with the first tier: and the lovely third tier did the same thing, so as to look over the bonnets of the sweet and lady-like second tier. Those three rows of nice ladies could see and hear very well. Those who sat behind the three rows of loveliness couldn't have seen or heard anything if they had stood on their heads. You can't see through a solid pile of ladies, three deep. Can you? A gentleman who sat in the third row, and was ashamed to stand up with his muddy boots on the velvet cushions, made a long, desperate reach forward, and anxiously poked a fine lady in the back.

"Would you be kind enough to sit down, madam, so we can see, back here?" he asked.

Then straightway from out the sweet and rosy lips of the monument of refinement and lady-like politeness whom that demented man had poked in the back, issued, in very sharp, short tones, the answer:

"No, I won't. You can stand up too."

That was an example of the charm of manner.

I saw some more charm of manner of that same sort, coming home. Indeed, it appeared to me that about every third person I saw that day was making himself comfortable at the expense of somebody else. We rode home five miles in a street-car. The car was packed even closer than the theatre had been. There was hardly vacant space enough in it to put your hand. It was a small car, and held but seven people on a side. But the seats didn't have seven people on a side. Not by any means. On one side there were five grown persons and a little boy; on the other side there were five grown persons and a little girl. Those ten persons and that small boy and girl stretched out their ugly corporosities till they took up the entire seats. They were like the hen which had to sit on thirty-six eggs. They spread themselves. To put it short, those selfish wretches sat there in the most luxurious manner, and the rest of us stood up and sucked our thumbs. When one foot became tired, we held it up like a goose in cool weather; and when that foot was rested, we put it down and held the other one up. How I did want to throw one or two of those women out the window!

Dear me! There is such a sight of piggishness in human nature, after all. And women are every bit as bad as men. That's the worst of it. The loveliest, the most elegant-looking lady you meet, whom you would expect, if you would expect anybody in the world, to be kindly-mannered, and gentle, and thoughtful of others, is apt to be be just as great a pig as anybody, when it comes to her own comfort and convenience, and she is often just as coarse and offensive in showing off her unblushing piggishness, as anybody in the world. That, I say, is the worst of it. I am discouraged.

If anybody knows anybody who has a charm of manner, I wish he'd write and let me know. ZIG.

☞ A Kilkenny sentry challenged an intruder on the Irish encampment during the recent English manœuvres. "Who are you?" said Pat. "I'm the officer of the day," was the reply. "Then, by the powers, what are you doing here at night at all at all?" immediately asked Pat.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, BY OLIVE KING.

DEAR POST—It is hardly time to say "Merry Christmas" yet, but if you were here and would go on a "travel" with me "up and down the plaza on the shilling side," you would be thoroughly impressed with the idea that the holidays were close at hand. Notes of preparation have been sounded, and a "gift enterprise" of such magnificent proportions was never before seen. I have been on the North side, and South side, and East side, and West side, (as they say in Chicago), and I never saw so much in all my life. Seems to me I have seen everything. And if my impression is correct, you cannot, of course, expect me to lay it all before you in one narrow column. I have been in toy-shops where I would-ed "I were a child again" every minute—perfectly oblivious and forgetful of all the disagreeable accompaniments of that blissful period. Not that I have no recollection of the uncomfortable wooden benches in the rickety old school-house, the master's scourging eye, the hard words of three syllables in Webster's spelling-book, and at home the numberless tumblings down-stairs and subsequent spankings. Oh, no! but you see all those China dishes and little houses and dolls and cooking-stoves were too much for me. There have been improvements since you and I were children, dear old Post, and I think the greatest mistake either of us ever made was in being born much before 1873. They didn't have creeping dolls and walking dolls, and crying dolls and winking dolls sixty years ago (more or less), and they did not have full cases of doll's wardrobes, including everything from hats to boots. They did not have little bouquets for them to hold in their tiny waxen hands, and little lace handkerchiefs and miniature eye-glasses for the near-sighted, and for the domestic ones crumb-trays and little brushes and brooms and dust-pans. And they did not have dolls as large as six year old children. But they do now, and they give one rather an uncomfortable feeling as one glances at them lying composedly in a long white robe—especially if one comes upon them unexpectedly. Perhaps they wouldn't look so much like so many full-sized corpses if they were dressed in pink tarletane, with lots of ruching, and had their bracelets and ear-rings and other paraphernalia and all on; but lying around "promiscuous" in *dishabille*, as it were, *I* was startled, and thought I should not like to meet one in a dimly-lighted room at midnight. I could mention a thousand things they did not have when we were in our infancy, and if I attempted I might speak of a few things they had then that the children of to-day know nothing about. I think we were quite as contented and happy with our little stocking-full of cake, raisins, Madeira nuts and sixpenny doll (if we were girls) and sixpenny bugle (if we were boys), as the young ones of this generation are with their Noah's arks and warehouses and building-blocks and whips and horses and Christmas trees. Perhaps we were happier—who knows? If so, we did not make any mistake in being born in the "long ago." Anyhow I am not going to try to mend matters now. It's too late.

After inspecting the toys, I went into Tiffany's. I paused before the diamond case, and the glitter and shimmer of the necklaces and brooches and bracelets and rings are before me yet. I didn't "would I were a child again" then, but I would-ed I were a millionaire's wife for about two seconds,—and then I stopped would-ing that, for I recollected how awful old and fussy and black and discontented and dyspeptic they all were; because, you know, people have to live a good while after they are married before they get to be millionaires, unless they have an extraordinary streak of luck, so I changed it, and would-ed I was about to marry a millionaire's son. The things there would have been beautiful for bridal presents. And then my thoughts went to Peter, my faithful husband—who, by the way, is nobody's St. Peter—and I remembered the two hundred dollars that fell to my share when my deceased grandfather's farm was sold, and that for a moment I wanted to prove my wifely affection by presenting the partner of my youthful folly with an amethyst ring, set with a diamond "forget-me-not." But I recollected the unsettled gas bills, and last month's rent, and refrained.

In the dry-goods palaces everything that can tempt the eye is on exhibition, offering as it were a premium to extravagance. Money, art and ingenuity, seem to have combined their forces, and the result is one continued dream of beauty and elegance. I don't believe it was all a dream, though, to some of those who promenaded those vast warerooms—or if it was, I fear a change came o'er the spirit of their dream when they balanced the ledger Saturday night. A pretty little woman is a pretty little humbug, anyhow! And beautiful Leila must be pardoned for throwing into her soft eyes a more tender light as she lifts them to Jack's honest face, and exclaims: "How beautiful!" when they pause before the elegant velvet suit that she has coveted for the last fortnight, and tried on, at least, half a dozen times. She never saw anything *so* lovely (with a gentle pressure of the gloved hand on the big muscular arm;) and then she sighs, and expresses a half regret that her darling husband is not able to purchase it for her, it would be so exquisite for Madame *Elite's* reception. That being a little more than Jack can stand, the purchase is made, and for a few days he is "just the best, and the dearest, and the kindest, precious old husband in all the world;" while he, no matter if he can't exactly afford it, feels desperately happy, I dare say, in humoring the lovely little creature who has condescended to bless his life and spend all his money.

We don't see much of the hooped polonaise in black velvet, but in its place we have a half-fitting pelisse of velvet, with a large, flowing sleeve and little collar. Sometimes they are close-fitting, and then they exactly counterfeit the long basques of some six years ago.

Many of these are quite plain, with the exception of a little thread lace on the sleeves and around the collar; while others are trimmed everywhere with the fur of the silver fox. They look very stylish and rich, as does everything that is fashionable; but next Winter, when they get to cutting them a little shorter, they will be much prettier. Their appearance, however, is prophetic of a thorough and absolute change in fashions. Overskirts are quite superfluous with them, and consequently will not be worn; and as anything more than a quarter of a yard of ruffling or flouncing or trimming of any kind around the bottom of the skirt will be effectually hidden, it will probably not be put on. Bustles don't harmonize with them either. To be pretty and effective a bustle must have a profusion of drapery and careless looping over it, and these plain, close-fitting, straight-up-and-down pelisses, which have no folds or gathers about them will, in all human probability, drive them from the field. It will be too bad, for they are just getting the things perfected. Two or three new inventions—spiral, back-acting, double-spring, duplex, elliptic, nonpareil *tournures*—(I believe that is what they call them for short, though I never could understand abbreviations very well)—are favorably received by the fashionable public, and are pronounced a great improvement on the Herald or Times newspapers, not excepting the Sunday edition. All this argues that we are to lose our trimmings, and overskirts and bustles—and after that, what is there to hinder a woman from being happy? (Answer next week.)

THE MAIDEN'S PRAYER.

She rose from her delicious sleep,
And put away her soft brown hair,
And in a tone as low and deep
As love's first whisper, breathed a prayer;
Her snow-white hands together pressed,
Her blue eyes sheltered in the lid,
The folded linen on her breast
Just swelling with the charms it hid.

And from her long and flowing dress
Escaped a bare and snowy foot,
Whose step upon the earth did press
Like a sweet snowflake, soft and mute;
And then from slumbers soft and warm,
Like a young spirit fresh from Heaven,
She bowed that young and matchless form,
And humbly prayed to be forgiven.

Oh God! if souls as pure as these
Need daily mercy from Thy throne—
If she upon her bended knees,
Our holiest and our purest one—
She with a face so clear and bright,
We deem her some stray child of light;—
If she, with those soft eyes and tears,
Day after day in her young years,
Must kneel and pray for grace from Thee,
How hardly, it she wins not Heaven,
Will our wild errors be forgiven!

WHITTIER.

LET IN THE SUNSHINE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, BY GLEN CAROL.

When I make up my mind to bid adieu to all the pleasant things of this world, or when, by force of time and circumstance, I bid them adieu *without* making up my mind, it will of course be one to me whether skies are blue or dark—but while I still hold fast the gift of life, while my eyes can look and behold earth's beauty, let me live in the sunshine! Bar your doors, and draw closer the heavy curtains, ye of the pale and sallow faces. Your hearts will grow as dark and cheerless as your homes—if they are not already so. Look at your house-plants, pale, sickly things, sullenly refusing to put forth a single bloom-bud, straining their blanched leaves toward the faintest gleam of light that finds its way through the tightly-closed blinds. No wonder the poor, defrauded things refuse to bloom, shut out from the natural warmth and brightness which they crave.

You complain that "the children do not like to stay within doors; that they want to be constantly out in the sun at play. Their complexions will be utterly ruined!" The shaded, tidy rooms inside possess no charm for them, it is true, so long as they can slip out of the gloom, and go racing down the garden walks, hatless, bonnetless, mindful of nothing save their own freedom and comfort, their keen enjoyment of air and sunshine. They are gaining in health, strength and happiness, and you, mistaken one, are bewailing their aversion to remaining within the house so dark and cheerless. Afraid of "ruining their complexions," indeed! Even tan and freckles upon those plump, health-tinted faces are preferable to that bleached and "tried-out" complexion of yours! Let the children have it their own way, so far as sunshine is concerned. Let them revel in it to their heart's content; and if, upon these brilliant mornings of early Winter, you will throw wide the blinds, and loop aside the curtains, forgetful of carpets easily faded, and acknowledging to yourself your horror of faded cheeks instead, you will find that there is no better panacea for depressed spirits, and no prolonger of good spirits, equal to God's bright sunshine. Let this quiet guest trail its shining garments through your home, bringing joy and gladness with its presence, and leaving behind it a benediction!

JENNY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Eyes—new pansies,
Lips—fresh roses,
Chin all cooks
Where Love reposes,
Teeth perfection,
Form all beauty,
Heart all trust
And love and duty. Z.

HUSBANDS, &c.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST.—Like many others, perhaps, I have been a silent, yet deeply interested reader of "Letters from Zig," and, with your gracious permission, will offer a few comments on a recent one bearing the above title.

Why, let me ask, dear Zig, don't you put a brighter face on the matter? You'll frighten our girls until we shall have more old maids in the land than even Mr. Wall's philanthropic theory can dispose of, viz: to educate for lady physicians all our unmarriageable old maids. Do you intend to become one, Zig? and are you prepared for the emergency? Apropos to the subject of matrimony, a word of advice, please, to yourself, Daisy Buras, and others who may be equally interested.

Do you know, girls, that when a gentleman proposes marriage, he is paying you the highest compliment it is possible for man to give or woman receive?

Then treat it not lightly at his hands. Consider the matter prayerfully, ere giving a reply; and once you have consented to become the guiding-star of his destiny, lighting his pathway upward to the very gates of Paradise, never, no, *never* let him have cause to regret that step.

The gentlemen naturally consider us angels before marriage, let us prove to them afterward they are not mistaken. It is possible for a lover to be retained in the husband, yet we must redouble our exertions in order to effect the same. Even thus we shall be amply repaid in the wealth of affection bestowed in return.

It is said, and truly I believe, especially in the morning of life, that a husband is placed in the hands of a wife, to be moulded at her will for *endless weal or misery*.

What our husbands need, dear Daisy B., is not a "blowing up," but rather a calming down, best administered by each loving wife in the bosom of her family.

The class referred to have doubtless already received an undue portion of your highly recommended panacea, and fuel from abroad can have no power to subdue the fiery flame. So far as my observation extends, domestic infelicity arises oftener from a want of proper forbearance on the part of the wife, than from any other cause. Yet there are exceptions of course admitted. Marriage was certainly designed by our Creator to enhance the happiness of man, not add to his misery, as it is often led to do.

When advising young men to marry, the writer has been painfully met with the remark, for the general credit of womanhood, or discredit rather, "Were we sure of a wife like yourself, there would indeed be a Heaven in it, but alas."

We have assured them the world is filled with such girls, any one of whom, perhaps, would become their guardian angel with a proper presentation, and true worthiness on their part.

Now girls, dear girls, be careful. My reputation for truth is *severely* at hazard in venturing the above assertion, and it remains for yourselves to confirm the statement.

We have the happiness both of young men and girls deeply at heart, and will labor zealously to lighten their pathway by cheerful, encouraging letters. Where you would cast a darkening cloud, Zig, be it mine to send a brightening sunbeam. With regard to women's dependence on man as the graceful ivy upon the oak, believe me truly, God *willed it so!* For the weary head and aching heart of woman there can be found no earthly resting place to yield so holy a calm as the fond bosom of a loving husband.

I can but wonder, Zig, if you were ever *really in love*, and if the gentlemen exists of Spartan bravery sufficient to ask you to be his wife. If so, I commend him! And am confident with your amiable assent, he will find, beneath that spicy exterior, a life-long true, warm and loving heart to repay him for his courage.

Please hasten the happy period, and, for the edification of the world, give us your experience of perfect bliss in married life, as nearly as mortal can attain. Yet you must make up your mind to love, honor and *obey*, in all that is not wrong, as you value the happiness of yourself and husband through time and eternity, Mrs. Stanton to the contrary notwithstanding.

Where love and reverence precede, as they should, obedience will naturally follow.

Remember the couplet which is virtually true—

"A woman ever rules th most,
When most she seemeth to obey."

GRACE GARLAND.

SONG.

O, moonlight deep and tender,
A year or more agone,
Your mist of golden splendor
Round my betrothal shone!

O, elm leaves dark and dowy,
The very same ye seem,
The low wind trembles through ye,
Ye murmur in my dream.

O, river, dim with distance,
Flow thus forever by,
A part of my existence
Within your heart doth lie!

O, stars, ye saw our meeting,
Two beings and one soul,
Two hearts so madly beating
To mingle and be whole.

O, happy night, deliver
Her kisses back to me,
Or keep them all, and give her
A blissful dream of me.

LOWELL.

PERSONAL.

Very short wedding trips are in fashion just now. Very short engagements, ditto.

It is one of those odd things "no fellow can find out" that Clara Louise Kellogg should be so clever in light operas when she weighs one hundred and sixty pounds.

Madame Patti has made her *début* in Moscow with such acceptation, that she was called before the curtain thirty times. The bouquet of camelias presented by the Princess of Dolgorouki was so large as to require two men to carry it across the stage, and the value of the flowers showered upon the famous cantatrice amounted to $500.

"Shall I have your hand?" said an exquisite to a belle, as the dance was about to commence. "With all my heart," was the soft response.

A Western contemporary finds fault with Ole Bull because he is now making farewell tours "once a year," whereas formerly he made them only "once in five years."

Marie Antoinette's work-table has been placed in the Louvre. The Empress Eugenie bought it at a sale some years ago for $8600, and it was fortunately saved from the Tuileries before the fire.

Three young English girls, the Misses Murray, recently accomplished the ascent of Mont Blanc.

Rubinstein's masterly performances are exciting great enthusiasm wherever he plays. It is a sight worth seeing to witness his entrance and departure from the scene of his task. His Cossack courtliness as he bows first to the audience, then to the leader of the orchestra; his haughty contempt of floral offerings, his utter avoidance of the customary airs and graces of the music-stool, these are peculiarities which are almost as admirable as they are amusing.

Bret Harte is tall and slightly built, with a fine open countenance, and black moustache and small side whiskers. He is not at all in appearance the man one would suppose him to be from reading his works. His bearing may be called aristocratic, and his manner is thoroughly refined. As a lecturer he does not compare favorably with himself as a writer. His style is fluent, but he is often indistinct.

Taking it for granted that it is allowable to gossip about royalty, we pass this latest interesting bit on. The Princess Beatrice does not always fall in with family decisions and plans, and her proposed marriage to the Marquis of Stafford is a very improbable affair. She was very much opposed to her sister marrying the Marquis of Lorne, saying she supposed when *her* time came she would be offered a dry-goods clerk. Germany, that inexhaustible field of royal Protestant husbands, she has refused to contemplate, as she "hates Germans," and even a Marquis may seem preferable to her by comparison.

Froude, the historian, is a nervous man, and when he speaks his body sways distressingly, and he hesitates for words and thoughts. A correspondent says of his recent speech at the Scribner banquet in his honor: "What with the apparent difficulty of delivery, the terrible monotony of inflection, and the peculiarly English accent of Mr. Froude, the first portion of his speech was well-nigh unintelligible."

Mr. J. Cordy Jeaffreson, in his new book on "Brides and Bridals," thinks that the custom of throwing an old shoe after a newly-wedded pair represented, first, the hurling of missiles at a man engaged in a forcible capture of a wife, and, later, the transference of authority from the parents to the bridegroom, the shoe or sandal having ever been an instrument of domestic correction. It is not without hesitation that we venture to differ from this weighty authority on a point of such importance, but we suspect that by the old shoe or slipper—for we never heard of a new one being used on the occasion—are signified rather the wishes of their friends that the marriage may prove a happy one, and that the young pair may fit each other as the slipper fits the foot; in short, that they may be a "comfortable couple."

MRS. C. H. W., West Virginia, writes to us as follows:

"DEAR MR. EDITOR—For the last twenty-five years, except during the war, have I been weekly blessed by the reception of the dear POST on Saturday evening. During all that time it has often comforted me in loneliness, in sickness and in distress. 'Long may it wave' over the fireside of every family in the land, to lighten the hearts of its readers; and may it continue to deserve, as it always has in the past, the praise and love of all who appreciate good reading. God bless you, dear POST, and may I never be without you."

An appreciative lady writes to us as follows:—

"DEAR MR. POST—I cannot refrain from thanking you for the beautiful premium chromo of "Little Samuel," which has just been received. Of all the premium pictures it is loveliest. "Little Samuel" is in itself sufficient to tempt any one to take our dear old "Post." What then, must one say of the "Post" itself? Why, just that it is the very best "Post" in the world. We certainly should be lost without it. It is almost as much a member of the family as any one of us, having been a weekly visitor for twenty years. Not many visitors receive a warmer welcome."

A WESTERN PAPER says that California farmers are turning their attention to hog raising with success. In the Middle States they raise 'em with corn.

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FACES AT THE WINDOW.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GEORGE JOHNSON.

In quiet village or noisy town,
I love as I wander through streets and lanes,
When day is up or when night is down,
To watch the faces that come to the panes,
By windows of houses high and grand,
By doors of the humblest in the land—
The lordly home of the millionaire,
And the dark abodes of shame and sin,
Seldom I pass that I do not care
To see what faces may be within.

Some look out so happy and round—
Some so wan and haggard and wild;
I wonder if ever the first have frowned,
And if the others have ever smiled.
Ah! wonderful faces I often meet
In my portrait gallery of the street;
Some with brows like an open book,
Whose thoughts you can read like the printed page,
And one, wrinkled and old, with a look
That I like to have belong to age.

'Tis that of a sunny-haired old man;
He lives in a poor and lowly place,
But I go that way whenever I can,
Just to glance at his calm, lovely face;
Lonely and gray, I know he has given
Up every hope but that of Heaven.
He has lived through many and sorrowful days—
I heard his story once with a sigh;
But I hardly pity him, for he will gaze
Soon out of the windows of the sky.

Sometimes 'tis the face of a fond young wife
That is looking out where the curtains part,
In her arms a little and laughing life,
And a mother's happiness in her heart;
And I know she is waiting there to greet
The coming of absent and loving feet.
How sure is the glance of her tender eye,
She leaves the window and goes to the door;
She has seen a form that will not pass by;
It bends to hers, and her watching is o'er.

Stern, rough faces and faces fair;
Faces that seldom have known a tear;
Thoughtful faces and faces of care;
All by turns at the window appear.
And often and often I hear as I pass
A patter of fingers against the glass,
And a glimpse of childish brows I catch—
Oh, beautiful living pictures of youth;
Heaven forever over them watch,
And keep them bright with the tints of truth.

But turn from such and wander with me
From the golden light, and fresh, free air,
To poverty's wretchedest haunts and see
The faces that look from the windows there.
Some so sunken and thin and pale,
Telling of want a pitiful tale;
Some whose eyes have a glare of hate;
And others, oh, God, I can see them now,
Stony and dark and desolate,
With not a sign of soul on the brow.

But the saddest of all I see are those
I sometimes find in the darkening street,
When the rude wind of the Winter blows,
And the air is chill with frost and sleet.
Poor little faces *outside* of the pane,
White with the snow or wet with the rain,
Gazing wistfully in from the cold,
Bright with a glow that does not warm
Poor little lambs with never a fold,
Poor little wanderers in the storm.

Oh, faces that look from lofty home
Or from the roofs where the wretched go,
Oh, simple quiet faces that come
To cottage windows, narrow and low,
Oh, glad faces that make me glad,
Oh, sad faces that make me sad,
Is there not coming a perfect day,
When you all with a common love will shine,
After the worm has eaten this clay,
Moulded in image of Him divine?

THE CHILTON ESTATE;

OR,

Close Play for a Fortune.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "A BLACK SHEEP IN THE FOLD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

A CUNNING SNARE.

It was near ten o'clock, the following evening, when Roland reached Chilton Villa.

The house looked more than usually dark and silent, and the high walls that enclosed the grounds, seemed like the walls of a prison-yard.

The gate was wide open still, and the two men who acted as sentinels, were stationed near it.

Roland halted at some distance from the gate, and began to pace up and down the road, trying to determine what was the best movement he could make.

However, he had scarcely taken half a dozen turns, when a man's figure rose up from the gutter, and cautiously approached.

It was the same person Roland had accosted on a previous occasion.

The man was really none other than Lamont, who had assumed a servant's garb for purposes of his own.

"Hist!" he said, in a whisper, coming close up to Roland. "And so you are here again? I'm glad. I hoped you would come."

Roland drew back a pace or two, startled, he scarcely knew why.

"You were watching for me?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Why did you think I would come?"

"Because," answered Lamont, with a forced laugh, "you love Miss Claudia, and of course you couldn't keep away from the house that holds her. I know something of the tender passion myself."

"Never mind that," said Roland, impatiently. "You have some object in coming here to watch for me. What is it?"

"Hush. Let me whisper it. Even the winds of Heaven must not hear my voice."

He attempted to approach more closely, but the young man warned him back.

"Keep your distance," he said, coldly, at the same time drawing a loaded pistol from his pocket. "I have come here thoroughly armed, and any show of treachery on your part might cost you your life."

Lamont retreated with a low cry that might have expressed anger or alarm, or even a mixture of them both.

"Do you suspect me?" he asked, reproachfully, after a moment's silence. "You wrong me bitterly. I have risked everything in order to meet you here."

"Why have you done so, then?"

"Because Miss Claudia requested me to do so."

"Claudia?" cried Roland, eagerly. "Do you come from her? God bless her."

He dropped his weapon, and of his own accord drew nearer Lamont.

"Speak," he commanded.

"I wish to take back everything I said the other night."

"Everything?"

"Yes. That Miss Claudia is happy here; and that Mr. Chilton is a true gentleman."

"Then you were mistaken?"

Roland felt his pulse throb painfully as he asked this question.

"I was. Let me tell you how I found it out. I went straight to Miss Claudia the next morning, and told her I had seen you, and even repeated what you had said to me."

"You did? What reply did the dear girl make?"

"She burst into tears, and declared that you were right if you thought she was unhappy here."

"What?"

"She said that Mr. Chilton and Reginald were persecuting her past endurance, and that her cousin was determined to make her his wife."

Roland uttered a savage cry.

"Oh, the miserable villains!" he panted. "I will soon put a stop to this vile work."

"She is little better than a prisoner in her uncle's house.

"Just Heaven!"

"She besought me to watch for you here again. I could not resist her entreaties. Let what will come of it, I am determined to stand by her."

"Thank you," cried Roland, wringing Lamont's hand. "You are a noble fellow."

"I serve you for Claudia's sake, remember."

"Yes, yes. You shall lose nothing by your devotion to our cause."

"She sent you a single line by me. Of course you are acquainted with her handwriting?"

"Yes, yes."

"Then you can read her little note; and afterward I am sure you will not distrust me."

"Quick, quick! Give it me."

Lamont affected to laugh at the lover's impatience.

"You cannot read it here," he said. "We should be observed. Let us follow the wall until we reach some angle that will screen us from the observation of the men at the gate."

"Why are they there?"

"To keep a sharp eye on whoever goes in or out."

Roland shut his teeth hard together. Had it come to this? Was Chilton Villa a second Bastile, that guards must be mounted and doors locked?

Just Heaven! Why had he trifled with his suspicions so long? Claudia had been suffering all this while, and he might have helped her!

But this was no time for regret. Lamont turned, and began to walk toward the wall, saying very softly:

"Follow me."

Roland did so. Lamont had given him no opportunity for reflection, or he might have hesitated.

Unaccountably a feeling of distrust began to steal over him as he stole into the deeper shadow cast by the wall, following close at the heels of his ambiguous friend. His hand sought the pistol he carried.

"If this is an ambush," he thought, "I will sell my life dearly."

Lamont did not speak or look back until they had reached an abrupt angle in the wall. Then he stopped.

"We have gone far enough for our purpose," he said, turning.

His face could not be plainly seen for the darkness. But he seemed to look hard at Roland for a moment, and then to hesitate.

"Here is the letter," he said, at last, in a changed, hard voice.

He thrust a folded strip of paper into Roland's hand. Then he struck a number of matches, and held them up in such a manner as to keep them burning as long as possible.

Roland opened the note, and hurriedly read these words by the light thus afforded:

"I am a prisoner in my uncle's house. My dear love, if these lines ever reach you—which may God grant—I pray you to hasten to my rescue. You had better come alone, and resort to strategy rather than force.

"You can trust implicitly the man who will give you this note. Be guided by him in all things. CLAUDIA."

Roland knew the hand, or at least thought he did. "Claudia wrote those lines, beyond a doubt," he muttered. "Poor, suffering girl."

Then he wheeled almost fiercely upon his companion.

"Enough," he said. "My love has called to me. I would go to her through flood or fire. Lead on! I am dying with impatience while we linger here."

"You are prepared to follow?"

"Anywhere."

"Good. You shall soon be under the same roof that shelters Miss Claudia. Then, you and I must trust in God for the rest."

"We will. Go on."

The matches were out, long since, and the two men had stood in the black darkness for some minutes. Lamont stole noiselessly forward a few paces.

"There is a little side-gate of which I have the key," he whispered. "It will be safer to enter the grounds here."

They did so, and found themselves in a narrow path, quite densely shaded. The shadows were very black indeed at this point. Roland could scarcely see his hand before him.

He drew back for Lamont to precede him. The villain seemed to do this somewhat reluctantly. But he walked on in utter silence.

They reached the house presently. It looked dark and silent still, like some sleeping monster looming up against the starry sky.

Roland could not repress a shiver. A chill ran all over him. With it came a dread, awful sense of impending danger.

Lamont groped his way to a glass door opening upon the terrace. Roland followed.

A key was softly fitted to the lock. Another moment and the door had opened, then closed again.

They were in the house.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CLAUDIA AND HETTY.

The remainder of that night passed like one long dream of horror, when Claudia and Hetty found themselves shut into a prison so much more terrible than the first had been.

Hope died in their hearts, and they were tempted to yield themselves up to utter despair.

The next day Reginald came up to see them. He was very pale, and his eyes looked wild and bloodshot.

He remained standing with his back against the door. "Forgive me if I have made you suffer, dear Claudia," he said in an unsteady voice, fixing a fascinating gaze upon her face. "I am sorry for it."

She shrank from him in a kind of horror.

"Then let me go away," she said, faintly. "Show your sorrow by ceasing to persecute me."

He slowly shook his head.

"I can't do that, Claudia. You do not love me. If I were to let you go away I should never see you again."

"What matter?"

"I couldn't live without you," he cried, fiercely.

"Hush!" She caught her breath sharply, utter loathing and contempt expressed in her pallid face. "Don't talk to me of love. You turn me cold."

"And you make of me a madman with your scorn and indifference. But they will not avail you. You shall be mine in spite of Heaven or Hell."

He spoke vehemently. There was a cruel elation in his face. He smiled upon her in utter mockery.

She could only stare at him, helpless and terrified.

"Our arrangements are nearly made," he went on, more quietly, but still with deadly earnestness. "This very night you are to become my wife."

"To-night?" she shrieked, the words escaping her lips involuntarily.

"Yes."

"No clergyman would marry us. I would appeal to him for protection."

Reginald's handsome features were distorted with a leer.

"*My* clergyman would," he answered. "And you may appeal to him as piteously as you please. But I warn you beforehand that he is a creature purchased with my money. He will acknowledge no will save mine."

"Enough," said Claudia, wringing her hands, and turning whiter yet. "You shall never claim me, living, for your wife."

"You cannot frighten me," he muttered, going out, looking very black and discontented.

Claudia threw herself into Hetty's arms.

"Oh," she cried, with a burst of tears, "if these wretches would only spare you. I have involved you in my ruin."

"No, no," sobbed Hetty.

"I have. They would let you out but for me. Perhaps I ought to yield to their wishes for your sake."

"Never. I would not accept such a sacrifice."

"But you will be murdered if you stay."

"I would kill myself if they separated us."

"Oh, Hetty, Hetty!"

"I would. For God's sake let me make some little atonement for being so weak and wicked in the first place."

"You never meant to wrong me."

"No, no. But I sent James Chilton away when he might have proved the best friend and kindest protector you ever had. I can do nothing compared with him. Don't deprive me of the privilege of standing by you and helping you to the extent of my ability."

Claudia said no more. But when Mrs. Chilton made her appearance later in the day, she flung herself on her knees before the wicked woman.

"Hear me," she cried, wildly. "I scorn to ask any mercy for myself. But I do plead for my dear friend, Hetty Deane."

Mrs. Chilton scowled, and then instantly began to smile in her sardonic way.

"Oh!" she said. "What do you want?"

"Hetty has done no harm. Let her go away from this horrid place. She will keep your secret—will you not, dear Hetty?"

"No," answered Hetty, loudly.

"Perhaps you would like to go away from this horrid place yourself," leered Mrs. Chilton.

"I have lost all hope. I know that would not be permitted."

"Indeed!"

"But you can restore Hetty to liberty. You gain nothing by keeping her here."

"Do you think so?"

"Of course I think so."

"Then let me assure you of your mistake," and Mrs. Chilton shrugged her shoulders contemptuously. "Do you take me for a fool? Do you take us all for a pack of fools?"

She stamped angrily, and shook her long fingers in Claudia's face.

"Why have we left you two together all these days?" she went on. "Was it because we pitied your loneliness? No. Was it out of regard for your wishes or Hetty's? No. Let the child go indeed! We want her here!"

There was something indescribable in the tone in which these last words were spoken—something that sent a chill of horror through Claudia's veins. She drew back, sighing heavily.

"Have I said enough?" the wicked woman added, spitefully. "If so I will leave you. But remember that this is your wedding-night. Put on your sweetest smiles, my dear niece, for you will make a charming bride."

She glided back to the door, opened it, and passed through.

"If you want any bridal finery," she cried, mockingly, thrusting her head back again, "let me know. What, not any? Well, that is strange indeed. You believe in beauty unadorned, perhaps."

At last the door closed for good, the bolts shut sharply into their sockets, and Claudia and Hetty were alone once more.

They looked into each other's faces very solemnly. They had fallen into the habit of doing this frequently of late. It was not often that either spoke; but now Hetty said in a low whisper:

"The end is near."

"Yes," returned Claudia. "Are you afraid?"

"No. We are in God's hands. His will be done."

"Amen."

And their trembling lips met in a kiss of devoted affection.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TREACHERY.

Roland and Lamont, meanwhile, on entering the house so secretly and silently, had made their way to the main hall, which was now unlighted, and had ascended the grand staircase.

At this same moment Claudia and Hetty were sitting in their far-off prison—for it was nothing less—awaiting with fear and trembling Reginald's appearance with the clergyman.

In passing through the hall, Roland had seen a gleam of light streaming through the key-hole of an apartment on the ground floor, and heard the low murmur of voices.

Involuntarily his hand had sought the pistol he carried. Lamont must have suspected the movement—he could scarcely have seen seen it in the darkness—for he suddenly grasped his arm.

"Take care," he whispered. "This is no time for boy's play."

"The inhuman wretches!" Roland answered back through his teeth.

But he went on, softly and noiselessly. On the upper landing Lamont paused a moment and seemed to be intently listening.

Then he quickly pushed open a door and led Roland into a small bed-chamber.

It was the same room that had been given to Hetty after Claudia made her appearance at Chilton Villa.

A very dim light burned upon the table. Roland looked quickly round the room, then into the man's face who stood beside him.

"Where is Claudia?" he asked.

"Hush!" breathed Lamont, with a sign of caution. "She is not here."

Roland's face began to darken. The sense of impending danger that froze him as with an ague chill, grew stronger and stronger.

"I must go to her at once," he said, in a low, determined voice. "Do you hear—at once!"

"Hush!" said Lamont, again, turning quickly upon him. "Remember the letter. I know its contents; you were to obey me implicitly."

"Yes."

"Then I command you to calm yourself. Why will you not trust me? For Miss Claudia's sake, as you hope to set her free, I entreat you to be quiet."

A dead silence followed. It lasted several minutes. Roland's eyes were once again on his companion's face, and he was trying to read its every expression.

In vain, all in vain. That countenance was a sealed book to him. If he trusted it at all, he must trust it blindly.

"Enough," he said, at last. "Now tell me what you propose to do."

"You must remain here for the present. You will be quite safe if you keep perfectly still. This room is unoccupied, and rarely visited."

"And Claudia?"

"You must wait a little before going to her rescue. The house is not quiet yet. You saw the light burning down-stairs?"

"Yes, yes."

"When that light is out we can venture to approach Miss Claudia's apartment. Not sooner."

Roland uttered a groan. It was hard, very hard for him to wait now, when he was so near.

Presently Lamont touched his shoulder, rousing him from the painful revery into which he had fallen.

"I might reconnoitre a little," he whispered. "Shall I?"

"Yes," cried Roland, eagerly. "Go, go at once."

Lamont left the room. The key clicked suddenly in the lock as he closed the door.

Roland sprang forward and turned the knob. The door did not yield. He was locked into the room.

Had Lamont betrayed him?

He could not tell. His first impulse was to cry out; his second, to kick the door from its hinges. But he conquered both.

Drawing back into the brighter glow of the lamplight, he carefully examined his pistols. They were all right.

"I shall sell my life dearly if it must come to that," he thought.

He crouched low against the wall, to the right of the door, and cocked his pistol. For twenty minutes he did not breathe—he scarcely stirred.

At last a step, stealthy as a cat's, sounded outside the door. The key turned, and Lamont entered.

His quick eye at once caught Roland's crouching attitude. He recoiled with a low cry, and grew very white.

"Don't shoot," he screamed. "What the devil do you mean?"

Roland dropped his weapon.

"I would have killed you if you had shown the least sign of treachery."

"What?"

"I was ready to put a bullet through your heart. Why did you lock the door?"

Lamont was trembling violently.

"You crazy hot-head," he cried, forcing a laugh. "I locked the door and took away the key that no one need come in upon you suddenly. That's all, upon my honor!"

"I am bound to believe you."

"Of course you are. Now sit down, and let us converse like reasonable human beings."

They sat down opposite each other. The flickering lamp stood on a small table between them. Both men were pale, and each glared at the other distrustfully.

"I did not see Miss Claudia," Lamont resumed, shifting uneasily in his chair. "I dared not venture near her room. It is yet early; I might have been seen, and my object suspected."

"Does she know that I am in the house?"

"Not yet, unless she suspects it from my long absence."

Roland looked away, drawing a quick breath. This idle loitering! Oh, how it tried him?

"We must remain here until after midnight," went on Lamont, looking him straight in the face. "I find it will not be safe to make a movement sooner.

At midnight Reginald had planned to make Claudia his wife. But of course Roland did not know this.

The young man said nothing. He threw himself back in his chair, thinking with all his might. What could he do? Whom trust?

Lamont broke the silence.

"There is a bottle of wine in the cupboard, yonder," he whispered, with a strange, sickly smile. "I will fetch it.

The cupboard was in one corner of the room. He arose, walked to it, and stood there several seconds with his back to Roland. When he returned he had two glasses and a bottle.

He looked ghastlier than ever in the uncertain lamplight. The hand with which he filled the glasses shook violently.

"See how nervous I am," he muttered. "I need a stimulant, and so do you, for we have hot work before us."

He pushed one of the brimming glasses toward Roland as he spoke. "Drink, my young friend. It will nerve your arm."

Roland could scarcely have told why he did it, but he suddenly lifted his hand and made a sign of caution, and looked toward the door.

"Hist!" he breathed. "What was that?"

Lamont swung half-way round. The instant his back was turned, Roland quickly and noiselessly changed the glasses on the table.

"I hear nothing," said Lamont, after a moment, still listening.

"Nor I. It must have been the wind, or imagination, perhaps. Let us drink our wine."

The next minute their glasses clashed together, and both were drained to the dregs.

Lamont smacked his lips, and then almost immediately made a wry face.

"Hasn't the liquor a strange after-flavor?" he asked, looking hard at Roland.

"I think it has."

"Ugh!" He threw himself back in his chair, and watched the young man from under his half-closed lids. But he said nothing more.

Roland's brain had never been keener in his life. But the case was quite different with his companion. Lamont sat very still. A film seemed to gather over his half-shut eyes. His head began to nod.

And yet he seemed to struggle against the lethargy that was stealing over him. When he peered at Roland, every now and then, there was something indescribably malignant in his glance—a wolf's horrible satisfaction with the lamb it is about to destroy.

Not a movement was lost upon Roland—not a glance of those horrible, filmy eyes. Suspicion was fast deepening into certainty, and the truth stood out before him bold and bare.

The wine had been tampered with, and Lamont had unwittingly drank the drugged cup intended for himself!

There could be no doubt of this; it was Lamont's intention to put him to sleep.

He feigned extreme drowsiness. Lamont looked relieved at this. He tried harder than ever to keep his own eyes open. But all in vain. They would close. His head fell on his breast, and he began to breathe heavily. He was sound asleep.

Roland waited and watched a little longer. Suddenly the lamp sputtered and went out. At almost the same moment he heard stealthy steps in the passage.

He drew back, and dropped behind the bed, next the wall. Somebody seemed to listen a moment at the door. Then came a gentle knock.

"Lamont!" said a voice.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Pretty Good—for a "Lord."

The London Court Journal says that the Marquis of Ripon told "an amusing story" the other day in an after-dinner speech at Ripon. This is "the amusing story:" He said he well remembered when he went out to America one of the first persons who came on board the steamer when he got to New York was a gentleman connected with the press, and having tried various persons of the English Commission, and not having extracted very much from any of them, he at last went in despair to a friend of his (the speaker) who was also attached to the Commission, and said, "Sir, have you nothing to reveal?" Well, his friend had nothing to reveal. Now that is what we call a deuced exciting story—for a lord.

TOM SPARKS, THE TELEGRAPHOPOLIST.

Tom Sparks, he would skin up the telegraph poles,
He tore in his trowsers and mutilled holes,
His mother would weep and his father declare,
Should Thomas again his integuments tear,
He would make the sparks fly, so he'd better beware.

But Thomas was heedless. His bottermost boots,
He chose from the shelf when he rigged for his toots,
Their new heels he ruined with holes bored therein,
And screws he inserted with points like a pin;
Thus equipped he would mount like original sin.

Not long had the Bogie, old Flom Jum, to wait,
Who looks after bad boys, and makes note of their fate,
For as Thomas was perched up aloft in the sky,
There came a despatch, like a flash, and, oh my!
It went in at his pocket and out at his eye.

Tom, melted, stuck fast to the telegraph pole,
And together they formed a conglomerate whole,
While the lightning, with tingle and flashing and crack,
Runs now up his bootleg, and now down his back,
Now shoots from his nose or his fingers, alack!

His arms stretched for miles into telegraph wires,
Foul things were shied at him by merciless shirers,
Tommy helplessly thinks to himself "Please don't do it."
His head turns to glass, and when pa comes to view it,
"Now," says he, "we may get some intelligence through it."—*Boston Transcript.*

ON A SUMMER DAY.

"Wi' lightsome heart I pou'd the rose
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause lover stole the rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me."

Harold gave me roses for my hair, and then he asked me to be his wife; and I accepted him.

Such a summer as that was! Mere existence seemed bliss, in the glorious sunshine of that afternoon; and I felt gay and young then, for the first time since I had left my school-friends, to become the pining drudge of my wealthy and capricious godmother, who, at her death, (two years before the happy, happy day of which I write) had rewarded my ten years' weary servitude by bequeathing me the whole of her large property. I think no one had been aware of her immense wealth, and certainly my good fortune was wholly unexpected by me. I had toiled to win at the most the "Leah" of a quiet peaceful ending to my life, in simple independence, and never dreamed of attaining the "Rachel" of affluence and Harold Courtland's love. Being one of those useless pitiable things, a rich spinster, without any friends that I cared for or had faith in, not old enough to ignore the existence of Mrs. Grundy and live in selfish comfort by myself, (I was twenty-seven, and considered good-looking,) and too old to be able to conform with perfect ease to the customs of the family with whom I had resided since my accession to riches (the Wyndhams, people themselves wealthy, who had no affection to bestow upon the penniless orphan, but were naturally ready enough to afford a home and patronage to their fortunate relation), I indulged in delicate health, and was so tired and worn-out by the fatigues of a long, hot London season, that though Harold might have made some sentimental allusions to my complexion in connection with the roses he gathered for me on that Summer day, had he been more apt and ready at poetical remarks, the most appropriate comparisons he could have drawn would have been with Gloire de Dijon, or tea-roses, so wan and sallow had my cheeks become.

* * * * * * * *

I saw a good deal of my fiancé during the months of July and August, for Halcombe, where I was staying, was only ten miles from —— port, Harold's place of business, and he constantly rode over to see me.

The following winter Harold was obliged to go to London. Absence makes the heart grow fonder; and all through the long months that he was away, I became more and more ridiculously enamored of my tall, beautiful Harold. I lived on his letters, and always knew the last by heart, long ere a new one was due. And if they were not the most brilliant specimens—why, I write an abominable hand myself; and I know that the cleverest people are often those who write the poorest, weakest letters; anyhow, in my fool's paradise, I was satisfied with Harold's.

I should mention here one little circumstance which at first only amused me, but as time wore on, and my spirits grew more dismal and gloomy from the separation from Harold, weighed on my mind, making me fret and fidget. It occurred one night when I was at the theatre with a large party of friends. We were an uneven number, and I was not sorry to be the odd one, at the end of the row, as I was feeling rather ill, and seeing the play was quite enough exertion without the extra fatigue of talking between the acts.

I could not close my ears (as I think I did my eyes), and Carry and the gentleman next her on my right were conversing pianissimo, so I could not avoid overhearing what two gentlemen behind me were talking about. They were both officers stationed at —— port.

"I saw the Heathcotes last week at Ryde. Birdie is in greater force than ever; she has got over her disappointment, I fancy," I heard.

"Her wings were only slightly singed, I think," another voice said; and at his next words I strained all my energies to hear distinctly. "Courtland *is* a handsome young fellow, but had hardly brains enough to fascinate the little scamp in reality."

"She was very ill all last winter, and—I have it from Randall, in whom she confided—she was desperately smitten with Harold Courtland; but they were not regularly engaged, and she thought to bring him to the point by flirting with some rich cad, and making Harold jealous."

"And lost him instead! He was awfully cut up at the time, but like the rest of the world, has consoled himself. I called at Halcombe the other day, and was shown the lady's portrait. Miss Courtland told me she has pots of money."

"Is she pretty?"

"Handsome; but awfully thin. Harold is very proud of her, of course; lucky young fellow, and his people are delighted."

"Birdie has not heard of it yet. What is the girl called?"

"She is a Miss Lovel." Then the curtain drew up, and they talked no more about me.

I asked my friends afterward if they had ever heard of "Birdie Heathcote," but they could give me no information about her. They said that Harold had always been in love with some ode or other all his life, and they supposed "Birdie" was "somebody in London."

By the end of May we, the Wyndhams and myself, were back in London, and my engagement being publicly announced, people began to decide that Harold and I would be married at the close of the season.

One night, soon after we came to town, Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham and I were engaged to dine in Portland-square, and were to join the girls at a ball in Kensington afterward; Harold was to be there also. The distance between the two houses being great, it was rather late when we arrived at the second party. Mrs. Wyndham expected to meet her daughters in the cloak-room, waiting to be conveyed up-stairs under the maternal wing; but finding that they were not there, and supposing them to have rebelliously gone to the dancing-room alone, Mr. Wyndham and I went up-stairs to look for them.

They were soon discovered; and leaving me with a gentleman who asked me to dance, Mr. Wyndham went back for his wife. I did not spy out Harold until after that dance, when he passed close to me, his attention so much occupied by the lady who leaned on his arm that he did not observe me.

I was much congratulated on the improvement in my appearance that evening; much to my wonder, for my head was aching, and only a few turns of a valse rendered me utterly breathless. My partner was an old friend, and seeing how dreadfully bored I was at the incessant remarks of "*How* strong you look!" "Why, you've quite a color!" &c., mercifully said to me, "Miss Lovel, do let me take you out of this hot room; there is a seat on the landing if you are not afraid of a draught?" and he took me to an ottoman placed in an alcove just outside a small boudoir opening on the staircase, and there left me whilst he went to fetch an ice to fortify my strength before I attempted another dance.

Voices within the room attracted my attention, and—was it mean? was I wicked?—I leaned my head against the wall, with my ear close to the hinges of the door, that I might hear every syllable that was uttered.

Colonel Forbes presently returning with my ice, I summoned up all my fortitude and said, in a calm tone I believe, that he must find Mr. Wyndham, as I was not feeling well.

People were so much accustomed to "Miss Lovel's airs and ill health," and Mr. Wyndham and I so very often left parties a long time before the others, that Colonel Forbes retired instantly to do as I asked.

My heart had begun to beat noisily when my ears first caught the deep sound of Harold's voice, low, passionate, and sorrowful, behind that door; but its action stopped, and I felt stabbed and dying, when I moved into the room to look at her whose unconscious rival I had been.

Her head lay on his breast as mine had never lain; his arms enfolded her as they had never circled me; and the quick showering kisses on her closed and tear-wet eyes were such as *I* had never received from Harold.

"I thought you knew that I loved you," said Birdie Heathcote. "Oh, why could you not trust me? Say again that you love me, Harold."

Harold's reply was inaudible, but it seemed to satisfy her, and she continued—

"This heiress, poor thing! does she love you very much? Ah, she cannot love you as *I* did—as I do! And you—"

"Birdie, my heart is broken! I can't love her like I love you. Oh, what am I to do?"

A great cry from Birdie, as she here caught sight of my terrible reflection in a mirror opposite.

They started guiltily to their feet, and I said sweetly and politely to Harold, as to some chance acquaintance, "Would you be so kind as to ask for my shawl? I am anxious to go home."

"Miss Lovel—Norah!" cried the poor boy, flushed crimson even to the curls on his beautiful blue-veined forehead, "I am a scoundrel, and deserve anything you can say to me! I was not half good enough for you—and—and—I did not think *she* cared for me. Your ring—"

He had taken off the diamond ring I had given him, as though desirous to rid himself of all my fetters.

I felt so strange, and was looking so different from my usual self, that I think he feared to leave Birdie alone with me, when I said again, "Will you get my shawl, please, Harold?" but he went away, and we two stood there, each waiting for the other to speak.

She was pale and trembling, too much frightened to realize the fact that she was happy and blessed beyond all expression; I flushed and faint, yet calm and collected in the wretched knowledge that the warmth and daylight of my life was chilled and dead forever.

I broke the silence.

"I should ask your pardon, Miss Heathcote," I said, "both for my intrusion just now, and also for having taken possession for this year past of what was yours by right. Will you shake hands with me, and let us be friends?"

She has great brown eyes, this Birdie, and a round dimpled face. She gazed at me in wonder before taking my outstretched hand. Presently she exclaimed,

"Oh, do not be angry with him! It is my fault—all my fault. I loved him so, and I didn't think he cared for me in earnest, and so I thought I had better forget him; and he is so proud, that he could not bear me to think he still loved me after my treatment of him. I know it was very wrong of him to make love to you; it was cheating you. But now I see you, I feel that he must love you, you are so beautiful as well as rich. I thought you would be old and ugly. And you will forgive him will you not? I dare say he will soon forget me."

And she stifled a bitter, choking sob, as Colonel Forbes and Mr. Wyndham entered the room; and almost immediately after them Harold appeared with my shawl, still looking very shamefaced and agitated. Mr. Wyndham was, as usual, very much obliged to me for taking him away from the hot crowded house; and I kissed Birdie Heathcote, shook hands cordially with my love, and went out into the chill, starlit night.

It was a story such as is only too often repeated in this world.

Two years ago Harold and Birdie had met, and fallen in love, and though without positive declaration on either side, had dreamed and lived for each other through just such a happy blessed Summer as I had passed.

But with the wind and rain of Winter had come doubt and unhappiness. Some well-meaning friends warned Harold that his angel's wings had butterfly tendencies—that she had damaged one or two hearts in her time. Birdie too was foolishly induced to believe that Harold was simply amusing himself with her, and so, recklessly involved herself in a perilous flirtation during her absence in the country. Such reports of her inconstancy reached poor Harold, as to determine him never to see her again; and it was about this period that he was introduced to me, and found in my society something soothing and grateful to his wounded heart.

I was unable to see Harold and Birdie Heathcote married, as I was ill and abroad at the time, and my wedding visit to them was not paid till Birdie had been Mrs. Courtland more than a year, and was the proud mother of a little girl, whom, she shyly told me, they had named, after myself, Norah.

I hope, I pray that they are happy, but I wish they were a little less poor. I could not help thinking, as I drove away from the house where they lived in mean, pokey little lodgings, that it would be a hard struggle for pretty Birdie to retain her bright beauty and cheerfulness as the years passed on, and her family increased, and the income did not.

This year people are not telling me how pink my cheeks are. My cough is worse than before. But I feel strangely happy and contented, even when Harold comes to see me, and sits by my sofa, awkwardly twisting my old ring (which I requested him to keep, a *gage d' amitié*) on his white finger, looking contrite, and furious with himself for having broken my heart.

I am very peaceful now. The Summer day when Harold gathered his roses for my hair seems so far distant, and the time when the Courtlands will be rich and prosperous draws beautifully near—for I have left my money to my little namesake—and another Summer day will soon come when I shall close my eyes and be at rest, and they will lay me in a rose-strewn grave. Roses will bloom at my head and at my feet. I have done with the thorns of life. *Requiescam!*

☞ One style of bonnet is called the "Mansard," because it takes a great deal of "man's-hard" earnings to pay for one of 'em.—*Boston Post.*

GRAY EYES.

BY ELLA WILLIAMS THOMPSON.

I have always counted it among the larger blessings of Providence that a woman can bear up year after year under a weight of dulness which would drive a man of the same mental calibre to desperation in a month.

I had no idea what a heavy burden mine had been until one day my brother asked me to go to sea with him on his next voyage. He and his wife were at the farm on their wedding-tour, and only the happiness of a bridegroom could have led him to hold out to me this way of escape. Christian's heart when he dropped his pack was not lighter than mine. Butter and cheese are good things in their way—the world would miss them if all the farmers' daughters went suddenly down to the sea in ships—but it is possible to have too much of a good thing, and such had been my feeling for some years.

So suddenly and completely did my thread-bare endurance give way that if Frank had revoked his words the next minute, I must have gone away at once to some crowded place and drawn a few deep breaths of excitement before I could have joined again the broken ends of my patience.

No bride-elect, poor in this world's goods, ever went about the preparations for her wedding with more delicious awe than I felt in turning one old gown upside down, and another inside out, for seafaring use. There was excitement enough in the departure, the inevitable sea-changes, and finally the memory of it all, to keep my mind busy for a few weeks, but when we settled into the grooves of a tropical voyage, wafted along as easily by the trade-winds as if some gigantic hand, unseen and steady, had us in its grasp, my life was wholly changed, and yet it bore an odd family resemblance to the days at the farm. It was a pleasant dulness, because, in the nature of things, it must soon have an end.

I went on deck to look at a passing ship about as often as I used to run to the window at the sound of carriage-wheels. One can't take a very intimate interest in whales and the other sea monsters unless one is scientific. Time died with me a slow but by no means a painful death. I used to fold my hands and look at them by the hour, internally rollicking over the idea that there was no milk to skim or dishes to wash, or any earthly wheel in motion that required my shoulder to turn it. I spent much time in a half-awake state in the long warm days, out of sheer delight in wasting time after saving it all my life.

So it came about that I slept lightly o' nights. Every morning the steward came into the cabin with the first dawn of day to scour his floors before the captain should appear. He had a habit of talking to himself over this early labor, and one morning, more awake than usual, I found that he was praying. "O Lord, be good to me! I wasn't to blame. I would have helped her if I could. O Lord, be good to me!" and other homely entreaties were repeated again and again.

He was a meek, bowed old negro, with snowy hair, and so many wrinkles that all expression was shrunk out of his face. He was an excellent cook, but he waited on table with a manner so utterly despairing that it took away one's appetite to look at him.

For many mornings after this I listened to his prayers, which grew more and more earnest and importunate. I could not think he had done any harm with his own will. He must have been more sinned against than sinning.

He brought me a shawl one cool evening as if it were my death-warrant, and I said, in the sepulchral tone that wins confidence, "Pedro, do you always say your prayers when you are alone?"

"Yes, miss, 'board *this* ship."

"What's the matter with this ship?"

"I s'pose you don't have no faith in ghosts?"

"Not much."

"White folks mostly don't," said Pedro with aggravating meekness, and turned into his pantry.

I followed him to the door, and stood in it so that he had no escape: "What has that to do with your prayers?"

"This cabin has got a ghost in it."

I looked over my shoulder into the dusk, and shivered a little, which was not lost on Pedro. He grew more solemn if possible than before: "I see her 'most every morning, and if my back is to the door, I see her all the same. She don't never touch me, but I keep at the prayers for fear she will."

"Do you never see her except in the morning?"

"Once or twice she has just put her head out of the door of the middle state-room when I was waitin' on table."

"In broad daylight?"

"Sartin. Them as sees ghosts sees 'em any time. Every morning, just at peep o' day, she comes out of that door and makes a dive for the stairs. She just gives me one look, and holds up her hand, and I don't see no more of her till next time."

"How does she look?" I almost hoped he would not tell, but he did.

"She's got hair as black as a coal, kind o' pushed back, as if she'd been runnin' her hands through it; she has big shiny eyes, swelled up as she'd been cryin' a great while; and she's always got on a gray dress, silvery-like, with a tear in one sleeve. There ain't nothin' more, only a handkerchief tied round her wrist, as if it had been hurt."

"Is she handsome?"

"Mebbe white folks 'd think so."

"Why does she show herself to you and no one else, do you suppose?"

"Didn't I tell you the reason before?"

"Of course you didn't."

"Well, you see, she looked just so the last time I seen her alive. I must go and put in the biscuit now, miss."

I submitted, knowing that white folks may be hurried, but black ones never; and I could not but admire the natural talent which Pedro shared with the authors of continued stories, of always dropping the thread at the most thrilling moment.

"Who was she?" said I, lying in wait for him on his return.

"She was cap'n's wife, miss—a young woman, and the cap'n was old, with a blazing kind of temper. He was dreffle sweet on her for about a month, and mebbe she was happy, mebbe she wa'n't; how should I know about white folks' feelin's? All of a suddent he said she was sick and couldn't go out of the middle state-room. The old man took in plenty of stuff to eat, but he never let me go near her. We was on just such a v'y'ge as this, only hotter. The cap'n would come out of that room lookin' black as thunder, and everybody scudded out of his sight when he put his head out of the gangway.

"He was always bad enough, but he got wuss and wuss, and nothin' couldn't please him. Sometimes I'd hear the poor thing a-moaning to herself like a baby that's beat out with loud cryin' and hain't got no noise left. She was always cryin' in them days. Once the supercargo (he was a cool hand, anyway) give me a bit of paper very private to give to her, and I slipped it under the door, but the old man had nailed suthin' down inside, an' he found it afore she did. Then there was a regular knock-down fight, and the supercargo was put in irons. The old man was in the middle room a long time that day, talkin' in a hissin' kind of a way, and the missus got a blow. Just after that a sort of a white squall struck the ship, and the old man give just the wrong orders. You see, he was clean out of his head. He got so worked up at last that he fell down in a fit, and they bundled him into his state-room and left him, 'cause nobody cared whether he was dead or alive. The mate took the irons off the supercargo first thing, and broke open the middle room. The supercargo went in there and stayed a long time, whispering to the missus, and she cried more'n ever, only it sounded different.

"Toward midnight the old man come to, and begun to ask questions—as ugly as ever, only as weak as a baby. 'Bout midnight I was comin' out of his room, and I seen the missus in a gray dress, with her eyes shinin' like coals of fire, dive out of her room and up the stairs, and nobody never seen her afterward. The next morning the supercargo was gone too, and I think they just drownded themselves, 'cause they couldn't bear to live any more without each other. Mebbe the mate knew somethin' about it, but he never let on, and I dunno no more about it; only the old man had another fit when he heard it, and died without no mourners."

"It might be she was saved, after all," I said, with true Yankee skepticism.

"Then why should I see her ghost, if she ain't dead-drownded?"

"Did you never find anything in the state-room that would explain?"

"Well, I did find some bits of paper, but I couldn't read writin'."

"Oh, what did you do with them?" I insisted, quivering with excitement.

"You won't tell the cap'n?"

"No, never."

"You'll give 'em back to me?"

"Yes, yes—of course."

"Here they be," he said, opening his shirt, and showing a little bag hung around his neck like an amulet. He took out a little wad of brown paper, and gave it jealously into my hand.

"I will give it back to you to-night," I said, with the solemnity of an oath, and carried it to my room.

It proved to be a short and fragmentary account of the sufferings which the "missus" had endured in the middle room, written in pencil on coarse wrapping-paper, and bearing marks of trembling hands and frequent tears. I thought I might copy the papers without breaking faith with Pedro. The outside paper bore these words:

"Whoever finds this is besought for pity's sake, by its most unhappy writer, to send it as soon as possible to Mrs. Jane Atwood of Davidsville, Connecticut, United States of America."

Then followed a letter to her mother:

DEAREST MOTHER:—If I never see your blessed face again, I know you will not believe me guilty of what my husband accuses me of. I married Captain Eliot for your sake, believing, since Herbert had proved faithless, that no comfort was left to me except in pleasing others. I meant to be a good wife to Captain Eliot, and I believe I should have kept my vow all of my days if the most unfortunate thing had not awakened his jealousy. Since then he has been almost or quite crazed.

I knew we had a supercargo of whom Captain Eliot spoke highly. He kept his room for a month from sea-sickness, and when he came out it was Herbert. Of course I knew him, every line of his face had been so long written on my heart. I strove to treat him as if I had never seen him before, but the old familiar looks and tones were very hard to bear. If Herbert could only have submitted patiently to our fate! But it was not in him to be patient under anything, and one evening, when I was sitting alone on deck, he must needs pour out his soul in one great burst, trying to prove that he had never deserted me, but only circumstances had been cruel. I longed to believe him, but I could only keep repeating that it was too late.

When I went down, Captain Eliot dragged me into the middle state-room, and gave vent to his jealous feelings. He must have listened to all that Herbert had said. His last words were that I should never leave that room alive. I had a wretched night, and the first time I fell into an uneasy sleep I started suddenly up to find my husband flashing the light of a lantern across my eyes. "Handsome and wicked," he muttered—"they always go together."

I begged him to listen to the story of my engagement to Herbert, and he did listen, but it did not soften his heart. If he ever loved me, his jealousy has swallowed it up.

I have been in this room just a week. My husband does not starve nor beat me, but his taunts and threats are fearful, and his eyes, when he looks at me, grow wild, as if he had the longing of a beast to tear me in pieces.

* * * * * * *

May 10. I placed a copy of the paper that is pinned to this letter in a little bottle that had escaped my husband's search, and threw it out of my window.

I am Waitstill Atwood Eliot, wife of Captain Eliot of the ship Sapphire. I have been kept in solitary confinement and threatened with death for four weeks, for no just cause. I believe him to be insane, as he constantly threatens to burn or sink the ship. I pray that this paper may be picked up by some one who will board this ship and bring me help.

Of course it is a most forlorn hope, but it keeps me from utter despair.

20. Herbert tried to communicate with me by slipping a paper under the door, but I did not get it, and he has been put in irons. Captain Eliot boasts of it. I wish he would bind us together and let us drown in one another's arms, as they did in the Huguenot persecution.

28. A little paper tied to a string hung in front of my bull's eye window to-day, I took it in. The first officer had lowered it down: "Captain Eliot says you are ill, but I don't believe it. If he tries violence, scream, and I will break open the door. I am always on the watch. Keep your heart up."

This is a drop of comfort in my black cup, but my little window was screwed down within an hour after I had read the paper.

June 10. My spirit is worn out; I can endure no more. I have begged my husband to kill me and end my misery. I don't know why he hesitated. He means to do it some time, but perhaps he cannot think of torture exquisite enough for his purpose.

11. My husband came in about four in the afternoon, looking so vindictive that my heart stood still. He gradually worked himself into a frenzy, and aimed a blow at my head: instinct, rather than the love of life, made me parry it, and I got the stroke on my wrist.

I screamed, and at the same moment there was a tumult on deck, and the ship quivered as if she too had been violently struck. Captain Eliot rushed on deck, and began to give hurried orders. I could hear the first officer contradict them, and then there was a heavy fall, and two or three men stumbled down the cabin stairs, carrying some weight between them.

Later. My husband is helpless, and Herbert has been with me, urging me passionately to trust myself to him in a little boat at midnight. He says there are several ships in sight, and one of them will be almost sure to pick us up. He swears that he will leave me, and never see me again (if I say so), so soon as he has placed me in safety, but he will save me, by force if need be, from the brute into whose hands I fell so innocently. If the ship does not see us, it is but dying, after all.

Good-bye, mother! I pray that this paper will reach you before Captain Eliot can send you his own account, but if it does not, you will believe me innocent all the same.

This was the last, and I folded up the papers as they had come to me. That night I read them all to Pedro.

"They was drownded—I knew it," said Pedro; and nothing could remove that opinion. A ghost is more convincing than logic.

Our voyage wore on, with one day just like another; my brother looked at the sun every day, and put down a few cabalistic figures on a slate, but his steady business was reading novels to his wife and drinking weak claret and water.

The sea was always the same, smiling and smooth, and the "man at the wheel" seemed to be always holding us back by main strength from the place where we wanted to go. I had a growing belief that we should sail forever on this rippling mirror and never touch the frame of it. It struck me with a sense of intense surprise when a dark line loomed far ahead, and they told me quietly that that line meant Bombay.

It seemed a matter of course to my brother that the desired port should heave in sight just when he expected it, but to me the efforts that he had made to accomplish this tremendous result were ridiculously small.

"I have done more work in a week, and had nothing to show for it at last," said I, "than you have seemed to do in all this voyage."

"Poor sister! don't you wish you were a man?"

"Certainly, all women do who have any sense. I hold with that ancient Father of the Church who maintained that all women are changed into men on the judgment-day. The council said it was heresy, but that don't alter my faith."

"I shouldn't like you half as well if you had been born a boy," said Frank.

"But I should like myself vastly better," said I, clinging to the last word.

Bombay is a city by itself; there is none like it on earth, whatever there may be in the heaven above or in the waters under it. From Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy's hospital for sick animals to the Olympian conceit of the English residents, there are infinite variations of people and things that I am persuaded can be matched nowhere else. I felt myself living in a series of pictures, a sort of supernumerary in a theatre, where they changed the play every night.

One of the first who boarded our ship was Mr. Rayne, an old friend of Frank's. He insisted on our going to his house for a few days in a warm-hearted way that was irresistible.

"Are you quite sure you want *me*?" I said dubiously. "Young married people make a kind of Heaven for themselves, and do not want old maids looking over the wall."

"But you *must* go with us," said Frank, man-like, never seeing anything but the uppermost surface of a question.

"Not at all. I'm quite strong-minded enough to stay on board ship; or, if that would not do in this heathen place, the missionaries are always ready to entertain strangers. A week in the mission-house would make me forever a shining light in the sewing circle at home."

"A woman of so many resources would be welcome anywhere. For my part, an old maid is a perfect Godsend. The genus is unknown here, and the loss to society immense," said Mr. Rayne.

"But what shall I do when Mrs. Rayne and my sister-in-law are comparing notes about the perfections of their husbands?"

"Walk on the veranda with me and convert me to woman suffrage."

Mr. Rayne had his baroucho waiting on shore, and drove us first to the band-stand, where, in the coolness of sunset, all the Bombay world meet to see and to be seen. When the band paused, people drove slowly round the circle, seeking acquaintance. Among them one equipage was perfect—a small basket phaeton, and two black ponies groomed within an inch of their lives. My eyes fell on the ponies first, but I saw them no more when the lady who drove them turned her face toward me.

She wore a close-fitting black velvet habit and a little round hat with long black feather. Her hair might have been black velvet, too, as it fell low on her forehead, and was fastened somehow behind in a heavy coil. Black brows and lashes shaded clear gray eyes—the softest gray, without the least tint of green in them—such eyes as Quaker maidens ought to have under their gray bonnets. Little rose-colored flushes kept coming and going in her cheeks as she talked.

All at once I thought of Queen Guinevre,

> As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
> With jingling bridle-rein.

"Mr. Rayne, do you see that lady in black, with the ponies?"

"Plainly."

"If I were a man, that woman would be my fate."

"I thought women never admired each other's beauty."

"You are mistaken. Heretofore I have met beautiful women only in poetry. Do you remember four lines about Queen Guinevre?—no, six lines, I mean:

> "'She looked so lovely as she swayed
> The rein with dainty finger-tips,
> A man had given all other bliss,
> And all his worldly worth for this,
> To waste his whole heart in one kiss
> Upon her perfect lips.'

"I always thought them overstrained till now."

"I perfectly agree with you," said Mr. Rayne; "I knew we were congenial spirits." Then he said a word or two in a diplomatical language to his groom, who ran to the carriage which I had been watching and repeated it to the lady; she bowed and smiled to Mr. Rayne, and soon drew up her ponies beside us.

"My wife," said Mr. Rayne, with laughter in his eyes.

Mrs. Rayne talked much like other people, and her beauty ceased to dazzle me after a few minutes; not that it grew less on near view, but, being a woman, I could not fall in love with her in the nature of things.

When the music stopped we drove to Mr. Rayne's house, his wife keeping easily beside us. When she was occupied with the others Mr. Rayne whispered,

"Her praises were so sweet in my ears that I would not own myself Sir Lancelot at once."

"If you are Sir Lancelot," I said, "where is King Arthur?"

"Forty fathoms deep, I hope," said Mr. Rayne, with a sudden change in his voice and a darkening face. I had raised a ghost for him without knowing it, and he spoke no more till we reached the house.

It was a long, low, spreading structure with a thatched roof, and a veranda round it. A wilderness of tropical plants hemmed it in. But all appearance of simplicity vanished on our entrance. In the matted hall stood a tree to receive the light coverings we had worn; not a "hat tree," as we say at home by poetic license, but the counterfeit presentment of a real tree, carved in branches and delicate foliage out of black wood. The drawing-room was eight-sided, and would have held, with some margin, the gambrel-roofed house, chimneys and all, in which I had spent my life. Two sides were open into other rooms, with Corinthian pillars reaching to the roof. Carved screens a little higher than our heads, filled the space between the pillars, and separated the drawing-room from Mrs. Rayne's boudoir on one side and the dining-room on the other.

The furniture of these rooms was like so many verses of a poem. Every chair and table had been designed by Mrs. Rayne, and then realized in black wood by the patient hands of natives.

Another side opened by three glass doors on a veranda, and only a few rods below the house the sea dashed against a beach.

After dinner I sat on the veranda drinking coffee and the sea-breeze by turns. The gentlemen walked up and down smoking the pipe of peace, while Mrs. Rayne sat within, talking with Rhoda in the candle-light. Opposite me, as I looked in at the open door, hung two Madonnas, the Sistine and the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception. In front of each stood a tall flower-stand carved to imitate the leaves and blossoms of the calla lily. These black flowers held great bunches of the Annunciation lily, sacred to the Virgin through all the ages. Mrs. Rayne had taken off the close-buttoned jacket, and her dress was now open at the throat, with some rich old lace clinging about it and fastened with a pearl daisy.

"Have you forgiven me the minute's deception I put upon you?" said Mr. Rayne, pausing beside me. "If I had not read admiration in your face, I would have told you the truth at once."

"How could one help admiring her?"

"I don't know, I'm sure; I never could."

"She has the serenest face, like still, shaded water. I wonder how she would look in trouble?"

"It is not becoming to her."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite."

"Your way of life here seems so perfect! No hurry nor worry—nothing to make wrinkles."

"You like this smooth Indian living then?"

"*Like it!* I hope you won't think me wholly given over to love of things that perish in the using, but if I could live this sort of life with the one I liked best, Heaven would be a superfluity."

"It is Heaven indeed when I think of the purgatory from which we came into it," said Mr. Rayne, throwing away his segar and carrying off my coffee-cup.

"Do you know anything of Mrs. Rayne's history before her marriage?" I said to Frank as I joined him in his walk.

"Nothing to speak of—only she was a widow."

"Oh!" said I, feeling that a spot or two had suddenly appeared on the face of the sun.

"That's nothing against her, is it?"

"No, but I have no patience with second marriages."

"Nor first ones, either," said Frank, wickedly.

"But seriously, Frank—would you like to have a wife so beautiful as Mrs. Rayne?"

"Yes, if she had Rhoda's soul inside of her," said Frank stoutly.

"I shouldn't."

"Why not?"

"Because all sorts of eyes gloat on her beauty and drink it in, and in one way appropriate it to themselves. Mr. Rayne is as proud of the admiration given to his wife as if it were a personal tribute to his own taste in selecting her. A beautiful woman never really and truly belongs to her husband unless he can keep a veil over her face, as the Turks do."

"I knew you had 'views,'" said Mr. Rayne behind me, "but I had no idea they were so heathenish. What is New England coming to under the new rule? Are the plain women going to shut up all the handsome ones?"

"I was only supposing a case!"

"Suppositions are dangerous. You first endure, then dally with them, and finally embrace them as established facts."

"I was only saying that if I am a man when I come into the world next time (as the Hindoos say,) I shall marry a plain woman with a charming disposition, and so, as it were, have my diamond all to myself by reason of its dull cover."

"Jealousy, thy name is woman!" said Mr. Rayne. "When the Woman's Republic is set up, how I shall pity the handsome ones!"

"They will all be banished to some desert island," said Frank.

"And draw all men after them, as the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin' did the rats," said Mr. Rayne.

"What are you talking about?" said Mrs. Rayne, joining us at this point.

"The pity of it," said her husband, "that beauty is only skin deep."

"That is deep enough," said Mrs. Rayne.

"Yes, if age and sickness and trouble did not make one shed it so soon," said I, ungratefully.

"Don't mention it," said Mrs. Rayne—"'tis bad enough when it comes. Do you remember that Greek woman in *Lothair*, whose father was so fearfully rich that she seemed to be all crusted with precious stones?"

"Perfectly."

"To dance and sing was all she lived for, and Lothair must needs bring in the skeleton, as you did, by reminding her of the dolorous time when she would neither dance nor sing. You think she is crushed, to be sure, only Disraeli's characters never are crushed, any more than himself. 'Oh, then,' she says, 'we will be part of the audience, and other people will dance and sing for us.' So beauty is always with us, though one person loses it."

She gave a little shrug of her shoulders, which made her pearls and velvet shimmer in the moonlight. She looked so white and cool and perfect, so apart from common clay, that all at once Queen Guinevre ceased to be my type of her, and I thought of "Lilith, first wife of Adam," as we see her in Rossetti's fanciful poem:

> Not a drop of her blood was human,
> But she was made like a soft, sweet woman.

We all went to our rooms after this, and in each of ours hung a full-length swinging mirror. I had never seen one before, except in a picture-shop or in a hotel.

"Truly this is 'richness!'" I said, walking up and down and sideways from one to the other.

"I had no idea you had so much vanity," said Frank, laughing at me, as he has done ever since he was born.

"Vanity! not a spark. I am only seeing myself as others see me, for the first time."

"I always had a glass like that in my room at home," said my sister-in-law, with the least morsel of disdain in her tone.

"Had you? Then you have lost a great deal by growing up to such things. A first sensation at my age is delightful."

Next day Rhoda and I were sitting with Mrs. Rayne in her dressing-room, with a great fan swinging overhead. We all had books in our hands, but I found more charming reading in my hostess, whose fascinations hourly grew upon me.

She wore a long loose wrapper, clear blue in color, with little silver stars on it. I don't know how much of my admiration sprang from her perfect taste in dress. Raiment has an extraordinary effect on the whole machinery of life. Most people think too lightly of it. Somebody says if Cleopatra's nose had been a quarter of an inch shorter, the history of the world would have been utterly changed; but Antony might equally have been proof against a robe with high neck and tight sleeves. Mrs. Rayne's face always seemed to crown her costume like a rose out of green leaves, yet I cannot but think that if I had seen her first in a calico gown and sitting on a three-legged stool milking a cow, I should still have thought her a queen among women.

While I sat like a lotus-eater, forgetful of home and butter-making, a servant brought in a parcel and a note. Mrs. Rayne tossed the note to me while she unfolded a roll of gray silk.

"DEAR GUINEVRE: I send with this a bit of silk that old Fut'ali insisted on giving to me this morning. It is that horrid gray color which we both detest. I know you will never wear it, and you had better give it to Miss Blake to make a toga for her first appearance in the women's Senate.

"LANCELOT."

"With all my heart!" said Mrs. Rayne, as I gave back the note. "You will please us both far more than you can please yourself by wearing the dress with a thought of us. I wonder why Mr. Rayne calls me 'Guinevre?' But he has a new name for me every day, because he does not like my own."

"What is it?"

"Waitstill. Did you ever hear it?"

"Never but once," I said, with a sudden tightness in my throat. I could scarcely speak my thanks for the dress.

"I should never wear it," says Mrs. Rayne; "the color is associated with a very painful part of my life."

"Do you suppose water would spot it?" asked Rhoda, who is of a practical turn of mind.

"Take a bit and try it."

"Water spots some grays," said Mrs. Rayne, with a strange sort of smile as Rhoda went out, "especially salt water. I spent one night at sea in an open boat, with a gray dress clinging wet and salt to my limbs. When I tore it off in rags I seemed to shed all the misery I had ever known. All my life since then has been bright as you see it now. It would be a bad omen to put on a gray gown again."

"Then you have made a sea-voyage, Mrs. Rayne?"

"Yes, such a long voyage!—worse than the 'Ancient Mariner's.' No words can tell how I hate the sea." She sighed deeply, with a sudden darkening of her gray eyes till they were almost black, and grasped one wrist hard with the other hand.

A sudden trembling seized me. I was almost as much agitated as Mrs. Rayne. I felt that I must clinch the matter somehow, but I took refuge in a platitude to gain time: "There is such a difference in ships, almost as much as in houses, and the comfort of the voyage depends greatly on that."

"It may be so," she said, wearily.

"My brother's ship is old, but it has been refitted lately to something like comfort. Its old name was the Sapphire."

This was my shot, and it hit hard.

"The Sapphire! the Sapphire!" she whispered, with dilated eyes. "Did you ever hear—did you ever find— But what nonsense! You must think me the absurdest of women."

The color came back to her face, and she laughed quite naturally.

"The fact is, Miss Blake, I was very ill and miserable when I was on shipboard, and to this day any sudden reminder of it gives me a shock.—Did water spot it?" she said to Rhoda, who came in it at this point.

I thought over all the threads of the circumstance that had come into my hand, and like Mr. Browning's lover I found "a thing to do."

The next morning I made an excuse to go down to the ship with my brother, and there, by dint of pressure, I got those stained and dingy papers into my possession again. I had only that day before me, for we were going to a hotel the same evening, and the Raynes were to set out next day for their summer place among the hills, a long way back of Bombay. Our stay had already delayed their departure.

This was my plot: Mrs. Rayne had been reading a book that I had bought for the home-voyage, and was to finish it before evening. I selected the duplicate of the paper which "Waitstill Atwood Eliot" had put in a bottle and cast adrift when her case had been desperate, and laid it in the book a page or two beyond Mrs. Rayne's mark. It seemed impossible that she could miss it. I watched her as a chemist watches his first experiment.

Twice she took up the book, and was interrupted before she could open it; the third time she sat down so close to me that the folds of her dress touched mine. One page, two pages; in another instant she would have turned the leaf, and I held my breath, when a servant brought in a note. Her most intimate friend had been thrown from her carriage, and had sent for her. It was a matter of life and death, and brooked no delay. In ten minutes she had bidden us a cordial good-bye, and dropped out of my life for all time.

She never finished *my* book, nor I *hers*. I had had it in my heart, in return for her warm hospitality, to cast a great stone out of her past life into the still waters of her present, and her good angel had turned it aside just before it reached her. I might have asked Mr. Rayne in so many words if his wife's name had been Waitstill Atwood Eliot when he married her, but that would have savored of treachery to her, and I refrained.

Often in the long calm days of the home-voyage, and oftener still in the night-watches, I pondered in my heart the items of Mrs. Rayne's history, and pieced them together like bits of mosaic—the gray eyes and the gray dress, the identity of name, the indefinite terrors of her sea-voyage, the little touch concerning Lancelot and Guinevre, her emotion when I mentioned the Sapphire. If circumstantial evidence can be trusted, I feel certain that Pedro's ghost appeared to me in the flesh.—*Lippincott's Mayazine.*

Changing the Subject.

An attentive "little pitcher" had heard her father instruct older brothers and sisters that when, in the course of conversation, a subject came up that seemed to be disagreeable to any one present, etiquette demanded that it should be changed as quickly as possible. Some days after, her father said to her as he left the house:

"Mary, papa wants you to be very careful, if you play in the garden to-day, not to touch the hyacinths. Will you remember?"

Of course she would; but on papa's return in the evening he found his hyacinths picked, and the marks of the little feet in the garden-bed.

Calling Mary up to him, he looked very grave, and said:

"My dear, you remember that I told you particularly not to touch the hyacinths, and now I find them picked, and no one has been in the garden but you. How is this?"

Mary laughed and said:

"Oh, papa, it was splendid in the garden to-day! I saw a beautiful little bird's nest, and there was a great big butterfly—"

"Wait, wait, my child. I am talking to you about something else now. Don't you understand me? I am very seriously displeased with you. I told you not to touch the hyacinths, and now I find them picked and your footprints all about."

"Oh yes, papa, I did have the loveliest time in the garden to-day. Don't you think it was a beautiful day?"

"Mary, how dare you answer me so impertinently! I am talking to you about your disobedience. Why do you not attend to me? I shall have to make you."

Rather sobered at this suggestion, "little pitcher's" countenance fell, and she faltered out:

"Why, papa, you said that when a subject became unpleasant to any one, the only way was to change it."

Papa saw the point, and the unpleasant subject was dropped for that once.

☞ The Nebraska Indians are allowed to ride free on all trains they can jump on while the latter are in motion. The tribe is being reduced very rapidly.

☞ The qualities of human nature brought out by the Boston fire were not all noble. A story is told of a merchant who invited a neighbor to store some of his imperilled property in the establishment of the former. The generous offer was accepted, and a few days ago the Boston "merchant" presented the afflicted neighbor a bill of $100 for storage. Boston knows who is the meanest man now.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A new brass band at Greenville, Ala. has put a stop to immigration to that place.

☞ A stranger travelling through Indiana is struck by the large number of tombstones bearing the inscription: "Sacred to the memory of ——, born ——, pulled a gun out of a wagon ——."

☞ At a recent wedding, the organist after waiting a tedious hour for the belated bride, revenged himself by playing "Love Not" with every variation and on every stop combination he could think of.

☞ Much-abused Bates, who is carrying the American flag through England, is now called "the international idiot."

☞ The following "notis" is posted in Lincoln County, Mo.: "Ce hear. Eye don't want enniboddi that has hosses which has of the eppizutic inflewenza, or any other infernel name, to come thru this gait under penalty of havin' their, the hosses, tales cut off closse behind their, the hosses, years. Keep shi. Mountaineer."

☞ A little girl was one day reading the history of England with her governess, and coming to the statement that Henry I. never laughed after the death of his son, she looked up and said: "What did he do when he was tickled?" If Henry himself could have heard this question it might have brought a smile, at least, over his troubled features.

☞ Dubuque beggars wear placards on their breasts inscribed: "Large bills cheerfully changed for all donations over ten cents."

☞ An unhappy poet remarks: "When the sun has set on the green-clad hills, And the nightingale's gone to its nest, There is that which banishes cares and ills,—'Tis to pillow my head on her breast." It would be worth eleven cents to see the poet pillowing his head on the nightingale's breast—wouldn't it? We judge his head is very small—*Norristown Herald.*

☞ An unaccountable overnight—When Mr. Darwin was looking for arguments to prove man's simian descent, he quite overlooked the instance of the Pamunky Indians.

☞ A gentleman gave a letter of introduction to a student of music about to visit Leipsic, who wished to put himself under the instructions of Professor ——, a famous teacher of music in that city. Upon the student's return home, the gentleman asked: "How did you like Professor ——?" "Oh, wonderfully! He gave me fine lessons. But he is a very singular man; he kept praying all the time he was teaching me." "Praying! what do you mean?" "Well, while I was playing, he clasped his hands, lifted his eyes to the ceiling, and kept saying: 'Good Lord! what sin have I committed to deserve this punishment?'"

☞ A young lady at Toledo fainted when told that over 500,000 men died last year; but was revived by the information that there were 13,000,000 left.

☞ Another convict is missing at the State Prison in Auburn, N. Y. The authorities are sure he is in the prison, but can't find him.—*Boston Post.*

☞ Waterford, N. Y., is said to be in a horribly healthy condition, and the doctors have fallen into a settled melancholy.

☞ There are trees so tall in Missouri that it takes two men and a boy to look to the top of them. One looks till he gets tired, and another commences where he leaves off.

☞ It is quite the thing among the swell equestrians of Cleveland to wear a necktie of the same shade as the rag which wraps the epizootical throat of the horse they ride.

☞ Carson, Nev., is holding cock fights to pay for a State University.

☞ Fortune plays strange freaks. A Toledo editor went through the war without a scratch, but stuck the shears in his eye the other day. Wickedness brings its own retribution. He probably never stole anything while in the army.

☞ The hunters of the opossum in Gordon county, Ga., are warned that all those animals marked with the letter K belong to a gentleman living in that county. The old gentleman spells caught with a K.

☞ John Hay talks of starting a new evening paper in St. Louis. The Chicago Post thinks that, unless he has two or three greenback factories to draw upon, there is likely to be some badly pressed hay in that locality.

☞ An ill-used husband in Minnesota has applied for a divorce because his better-half beats him.

☞ It occurred to a Danbury scholar, while writing a composition last week, to make the remarkable statement that "an ox does not taste as good as an oyster, but it can run faster."

☞ A charitable inhabitant of St. Louis lately sent a bundle containing a waterfall, a suspender, a neck-tie and a shoe-string, "for the relief of the suffering poor."

☞ "Of all the reverses experienced by me," said a penurious Croesus, dwelling in the fashionable avenue, "the only thing that gave me satisfaction was my discovery that I could reverse paper shirt collars."

☞ Elegant people will in the future desist from describing sudden cold weather as a "cold snap" or a "cold spell." The proper English for the occasion is that we are experiencing a "polar wave."

☞ In Chicago the other morning a young man named Phœnix arose from the hashes of the Briggs House.

☞ The following curious advertisement appeared in one of the Cincinnati papers the other day:—"PERSONAL—WANTED—The undersigned, a healthy young man, unable to procure other employment at which he can make an honest living, desires to inform Professors of Medicine and Surgery that he will submit himself to experimental operations of almost any description for reasonable compensation. Address Vivisection, box 2,845."

☞ In speaking of a local debating society, a country paper says: "Our village debating clubs are in full blast, and questions that have engrossed the intellectual functions of sages ever since the flood, are being decided at the rate of two a week."

☞ A rusty looking agriculturist went into the office of the Danbury News last week, and after looking around earnestly enough to elicit an inquiry as to his business, said "it wasn't nothin' much; but he had left a big cucumber here in the fall for a notice, and thought as how he was in town he might run in and get it if we was through with it."

☞ At Ogdensburg, New York, they have a "Burns Curling Club." It is a noticeable fact, too, that curling is very frequently accompanied with burns.—*New York Commercial Advertiser.*

☞ An unstamped letter dropped in the Springfield Post-office was recently forwarded, as usual, by the Young Men's Christian Association, and reached its destination. On being opened it was found to contain the following: "Send me another barrel of that gin."

☞ There is to be a grand baby show at Vienna, under the superintendance of Baron von Schwarzenboren. If there is anything in a name to keep the babies quiet, there will be little squirming at that fair. Prudent nurses will be careful how they call up such a bugaboo to quiet nervous children.

☞ Says the Titusville Press: "There is one editor in the oil region who suffers terribly from corns on his thumb and forefinger, occasioned by his labor in getting up interesting local items with his shears. Unless he can learn to scissors with his left hand, there will be a lack of original matter in his paper soon, and the other employees in the office stand a chance of finding an exchange two hours' old that does not look as though it had been run through a paper rag cutter."

ROY THORNBURY'S WOOING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY ANNE L. FORCELLE.

"I shall see you to-night."

"At Mrs. Granger's? Yes, I shall be there. Hope it wont be a 'crush;' they are so demoralizing, and make one feel so viciously disposed toward the other unfortunates."

Roy Thornbury smiled as he looked down at the little figure before him. "Are you often viciously disposed, Mrs. Kathlane?"

"Always at a 'crush.' I wish you would not call me that, Roy. I believe you do it purposely to tease me, and I don't like it." The last words were spoken sharply, as a spoiled petulant child might have spoken, and there was a cloud on the face which looked up for a moment from the soft vividly colored wools which the white, slender fingers were knitting into some incomprehensible "fancy-work." A very beautiful face it was, and a very beautiful woman was little Mrs. Kathlane, and no one in the wide world was more thoroughly convinced of that fact than Roy Thornbury.

She was slight and *petite* in figure—girlish looking still, despite her four and twenty years. No other woman would have dared, with her complexion, to have worn the colors which she did; but in defiance of ordinary rules, she wore, this morning, a deep, royal purple dress, with purple bands in her heavy black hair, and looked, as no other woman could have looked—charming. Her black hair drooped low over her forehead, in great, lustrous waves, and was fastened with a high, golden comb. Her face was almost marvellous in its perfect form and brilliant coloring, and her great, black eyes with their long lashes were enough of themselves to turn an ordinary man's head.

"I don't like it," she said again, flashing a look at her companion, who was abstractedly tangling the bright wools, and apparently lost in thought, "and I shall be seriously angry with you if you persist in being so silly—for it is silly, after you have known me since I was a little child, to pretend that we are strangers."

"I'll not call you so again, Mellicent, only—"

"Only what?" The imperious little widow gave him another searching glance.

"Things have changed a great deal since you were a child, Mellicent. You are wealthy, courted and flattered now, and I—but it is no good talking of these things. I must be going. Will you promise me the first waltz to-night?"

"Certainly. I hope you appreciate my kindness. I waltz very rarely, you know."

"I do, indeed—and now I must go down to that 'stupid, old office,' as you call it, and make up for lost time. Good-morning, Mellicent—don't forget your promise," and then he was gone—unconscious, as he walked swiftly down the street that Mellicent Kathlane's dark eyes were looking after him, and that when she turned back to her work, a soft, little sigh fluttered from her beautiful lips, and a little shadow clouded her face.

He had known her, as she said, since she was a little child, and he, a strong, rude lad, had loved the flower-faced little Mellicent dearly; and when, at the age of eighteen, he had gone away from his village home it was with a secret determination to return after years had passed, and claim her, who, although she was a child not a dozen years old as yet, had taken the warmest place in his warm heart for her own.

Years passed by, and although Roy Thornbury worked hard and well, the fortune he so ardently wished for never came. He was an honorable man, and crushing his own heart back, he took his father's burdens on his strong, young shoulders, and bore them bravely. Only once he faltered, and that was when, after scarcely six years had passed since he first went out into the world, news came to him that Mellicent Dimer, his "little Milly," was married. It was her father's wish, the gossips said. Mr. Kathlane was immensely wealthy, and having been fascinated by Mellicent's beauty, Mr. Dimer had used all his influence to make his daughter consent to the marriage, and so, after a brief courtship, Mellicent went to her stately home in the great city, and Roy Thornbury wearily went on with his dull, distasteful labor with not even the old boyish dream to lighten his task.

Six years more passed slowly by, making many changes in the affairs of both. Mr. Kathlane died suddenly after two years of married life, and Mellicent, who had faded and drooped during her husband's short illness, after a year of mourning was ordered to Europe for her health.

She had been back nearly a year at the time we first introduced her to the reader, and, during that time, the old, childish friendship for Roy Thornbury had been warmly renewed, and Roy had discovered that, charming as she was in her childhood and girlhood, now that she was a woman she was infinitely more so.

During this year, life had grown a great deal brighter to Roy Thornbury; he was prospering, slowly and steadily, and had gained many friends. Anxious mammas had long looked upon him with favor, and many bright eyes had given him bewitching glances, but in vain. He was impervious to everything of the kind.

Flirtation, even of the mildest type, had no charms for him, and, although he was made aware, in many ways, that he was considered a "catch," he took no advantage of that knowledge, and was voted "incorrigible" by the belles and beauties of his acquaintance.

"How beautiful she is!" he thought, as he walked away from the house. "Just the same little Milly at heart, too; ah, me! if—" but what that "if" meant, he barely confessed even to himself.

That night he watched eagerly for her in the brilliantly-lighted rooms—but it was not until very late that she arrived; and then, as she came down the long rooms—moving as easily and gracefully as though she had been, from earliest childhood, accustomed to reign in society instead of living in an obscure country village until she was grown to womanhood—a murmur of admiration followed her.

She was dressed in a trailing robe of pale, silvery blue, with an overdress of soft, white lace; her beautiful neck and arms were bare, save for their ornaments of fretted gold; her face was untouched by paint or powder, and her vivid coloring made her beauty seem almost unearthly as compared with the inane, pink-and-white faces around her. Her black hair, elaborately dressed, was fastened here and there with drooping sprays of scarlet flowers, and at her bosom, looping her over-dress and in her jewelled *bouquetaire*, the scarlet buds glowed and burned.

"Is she not lovely?" That was a question which every one felt could be answered but in the affirmative. And many an envious heart was hidden under the smiling faces which greeted her.

"There is Mrs. Kathlane, Mr. Thornbury," said Cornelia Granger, a tall, pale, ill-natured girl, to whom Roy had been saying civil nothings for the last few minutes. "All you gentlemen are wild about her, I believe. Red and blue—what execrable taste! I wonder some one doesn't tell her better.

"Every one has not your critical eyes, Miss Cornelia," said Roy, politely, but with inward rejoicing at the fact. "I thought her dress charming."

"Of course." Miss Cornelia was not an amiable girl, as we have said, and at that moment she would have liked to box the provokingly beautiful widow's ears soundly. "You are wild over her like the rest of them. You have probably been invited to the wedding?"

There was a malicious gleam in her pale eyes as she glanced at him over her fan, and he was conscious of flushing a little as he met her gaze.

"What wedding?" he said, trying to seem unconcerned.

"*La belle* Kathlane's. You knew of it, of course Mr. Worthington is the happy man, although, at present, it is all *sub rosa*. He is her late husband's nephew, and it has been said that there was trouble on his account before poor Mr. Kathlane died. She married him simply for his money—that's well known—and the handsome nephew used to be a very frequent visitor to his young aunt. There was a deal of gossip about it at the time, and—but there's Dick Worthington now. Look how her color comes when she speaks to him."

"Are you quite certain your information is correct, Miss Cornelia?"

The pale eyes glanced at him again and then looked away.

"About the engagement? Quite sure, Mr. Thornbury."

She was a little disappointed at the way he received her words, for he did not change color or seem, in reality, to feel much surprise; he stood laughing and chatting with her for a few moments on indifferent subjects, and then, excusing himself, sauntered across the room to where Mrs. Kathlane sat surrounded by an admiring group.

"It is my waltz," he said as she looked up and greeted him with one of her brightest smiles—"or are you too tired?"

"Tired?" She laughed a little silvery laugh as she rose. "I am never tired. Richard, I will leave my flowers and fan with you as a hostage."

It was nothing, this leaving with him her fan and flowers—it was like a thousand other little coquettish ways which she had—but Roy, thinking—oh! so bitterly—of what had just been told him, fancied that he saw something deeper than her usual light coquetry in the glance she gave the handsome young fellow, and groaned in spirit.

"One, two, three. One, two, three. You are shockingly out of step, Roy!" said she after the first turn. "What is the matter? You look as if you had seen a ghost."

"I have," he said, almost grimly—"the ghost of a dead hope;" and she, half-frightened at his tone, looked up at him questioningly, but he smiled back at her, and she was reassured.

"Don't talk nonsense, Roy. There! you are dancing beautifully now. What were you and that odious Cornelia talking about over there in the corner?" And so they whirled lightly through the dance, Roy almost startling Mellicent by his unwonted gayety, laughing and chatting like any one but his grave self, and she, the color deepening in her cheeks, the light in her eyes growing momentarily brighter, looked like a veritable "dance-sprite," so airily did she float through the rooms.

"How beautifully they waltz!" Even Cornelia Granger involuntarily spoke in admiration, and a slender youth near her gave it as his opinion that "Thistledown couldn't be lighter than Mrs. Kathlane in a waltz."

"Are you tired?" said Roy, looking down at the beautiful face, and Mellicent answered "No—I could dance forever;" and so they danced on and on, until Roy saw the bright color fading away, and the sensitive mouth beginning to droop a little at the corners.

"You *are* tired," he said, and then, before she could answer, he whirled her though the low, open window into the cool, fresh air on the balcony.

"Thanks," she said. "I believe I was a little faint. Will you send for my cloak?" And then, until her cloak came, she sat quiet, like a tired child, with her head resting wearily on the railing.

"The next dance but one is Richard's," she said, as he wrapped the soft white cloak around her tenderly. "I must not slight him—but we will stay out here until then, unless you wish to go back—in which case I will not keep you with me."

"I shall not dance again to-night," he answered, "unless with you."

"I am engaged for every one, two or three times over, I am afraid," she said, laughing, "I am sorry, but—"

"No matter," he interrupted her, almost rudely. "I must get used to it, I suppose." He was standing before her, looking down at her, and she, in her pretty, imperious way, pulled him down to her level.

"You are cross to-night," she said; "sit here beside me, and tell me what it is that troubles you."

He hesitated a moment, and then, with a reckless determination to tell her everything, and then leave her forever, he told her the story of his long love for her. Told her in a fierce, hard way which almost frightened her, and yet made her reverence and admire him more than she had ever done before.

"I have loved you, Mellicent. I love you now, more than you can ever know, and I have not told you because—because you are so far removed from me in every way. I feared you would think me mercenary. I feared—Oh, Mellicent! God only knows how I have loved you, how I have longed to tell you, and yet I have not had the courage. Now it is too late either for harm or good. I shall pray for your happiness always, and that of the man who—"

"What do you mean?" The profound wonder in her voice made him hesitate for a moment.

"I have heard of your engagement, and hope you will be happy."

"Ah, Roy, who has told you?" she half rose as she spoke, but at that moment Richard Worthington stepped through the low window and came toward them.

"I have been searching for you everywhere," he said, laughing in his boyish, good-natured way. "It's my dance, most respected aunt," and Mellicent was forced to go without another word to the man beside her.

"Have you and Mr. Thornbury been quarrelling, auntie?" said Richard, who, to do him justice, was entirely innocent of a thought such as he was accused of by Cornelia Granger, and was not in the least "in love with his fascinating aunt." "He looked black as a thunder-cloud, and you, actually, auntie, you are pale."

"I was a little faint after the waltz," she answered. "Don't tease me, Dick," and so Richard desisted from his inquiries.

Meanwhile Roy Thornbury left alone with only his own thoughts for company, sat feeling as utterly and entirely wretched, as a man can feel but once in his lifetime. Inside the rooms the music kept untiringly on, the gay dancers floated by the windows and every face was bright with smiles, and outside, in the darkness, a man sat alone, struggling bravely to lift his cross and bear it uncomplainingly.

How long he sat there he knew not, but at last he roused himself, and rose to his feet. "I must go back," he said, "Cornelia Granger will have a delicate bit of gossip if she misses me," and then as he re-entered the room a servant came to him with a glass of water on a salver.

"You is the gentleman that ordered it, for sure," insisted the precocious African, and then, to his great surprise as he turned away, a little note was deposited in his hand. "The lady is in the library, sah," said the wily messenger, and then Roy, making his way slowly through the rooms, stopping to speak, first to one, and then to another to blind the keen, pale eyes which he felt were watching him, reached the hall at last, and, standing at the foot of the stairs, read the two lines which had been so mysteriously sent to him.

"I may seem bold," said the note, "but I must see you. You have been deceived, and I know by whom."

The library door was ajar, and as he entered a little figure all in silvery blue, and soft white lace, with scarlet buds glowing and burning here and there, turned and advanced a step toward him. There were tears in the great black eyes, and the red lips were trembling like a grieved child's.

"You believed Cornelia Granger," she said. "A friend of mine has just told me what she said to you—oh, Roy!"

"You are not engaged?" he caught her hands almost rudely.

"No, I am not."

"And you—"

"I love you dearly, Roy."

A Reminiscence of Forrest.

Mr. T. C. C., the first editor of "The Post," contributes the following reminiscence of the late great tragedian:—

The death of this eminent tragedian recalls to mind his "first appearance" in the office of the *Saturday Evening Post*, some forty-nine years since; immediately after his return from New Orleans. This was, I think, in the autumn of 1823, when the *Saturday Evening Post* occupied the old Franklin premises, "back of No. 53 Market street." On one bright, sunny morning a visitor entered, introducing himself as Edwin Forrest, and bearing in his hand a paper which, on being unfolded, proved to be a printed hand bill which he had brought with him from the Crescent city, and about which he appeared to be greatly excited, and not a little vain. It was not a theatrical programme, not a "bill of the play," at least not of a play *on*, but rather *off* the stage; being a poster with staring capitals, in which the youthful player had posted the manager of the New Orleans theatre. The manager, not having the fear of the embryo tragedian before his eyes, and little imagining the future glory of the young stripling, had put some indignity upon Mr. Forrest which his proud spirit resented. Hence followed the Poster, preceded by the customary "Challenge," followed by the subsequent farewell to the New Orleans stage, and the reappearance in the City of Brotherly Love. Young Forrest was in high spirits, and I regret my inability to remember now the exciting details of the *comedy* which came so near being a *tragedy* to one of the belligerents, and which Mr. Forrest related with a mixture of tragedy and farce. Had I then imagined the future career of the speaker who so well "spoke his little piece," I should certainly have preserved the placard with which he then entertained his small but select audience. I subsequently had the pleasure of being appointed a "committee of one" to invite Mr. Forrest to an entertainment given by the old Philadelphia Forum, of which, besides several well-known members of the Bar, the late Wm. L. Maddock, and my excellent friends Robert F. Walsh, and Wm. Chapin, of the Blind Asylum, were active members. My visit on that occasion was to the residence of Mr. Forrest's two sisters, in South street, above Second, where the great tragedian then made his home. There it is probable the "master-spirit" of the stage had more real comfort and domestic enjoyment than fell to his lot in after life.

I accompanied Edwin Forrest to New York, and had the pleasure of witnessing his first appearance at the old Park Theatre, when, as the sable Moor, he electrified a New York audience—giving them a rare specimen of his new conception of Othello. What a grand success! what a brilliant career! and what domestic sorrows and "unrequited love!" But all is now over, and "Othello's occupation's gone. These incidents in the life of a truly eminent citizen may serve his future biographer; and it may be added here, that one of the most successful original plays, The Gladiator, written expressly for Mr. Forrest, was from the pen of the late Dr. Bird, editor of the *North American*, at one time my associate publisher, the germ of the play being a poem entitled, "The Gladiator," written for me, and published in my own paper as early as 1827. T. C. C.

SHIPS WITHOUT SEA-SICKNESS.

The compass in the binnacle of a ship is so arranged that the needle is kept very nearly in a horizontal position. The tell-tale compass, which hangs under the deck in the captain's cabin, is so suspended that its face always keeps the horizontal. The chronometer is arranged in its outer case in such a way that the motion of the ship shall not violently disturb its equilibrium. The hammocks in which sailors sleep are hung "fore-and-aft," that with the roll of the vessel the weight of the sleeper may still keep the poise of his swinging bed. But "when she pitches" nothing can prevent the see-saw by which, now the heads are up, and now the heels. Berths for passengers, though ranged in the line of the vessel's length, are stationary, and take the whole benefit of the vessel's motion. So the cabin passengers are really not so well accommodated as sailors in hammocks. But, it is proper to observe, sailors in merchant or passenger vessels have to put up with "bunks." *If* the hammock, or a swinging cot of more pretension could be substituted for the "berth," and *if* the passenger, apprehensive of nausea, would take care that nothing, even so slight as a brush or a fan hang in sight to waken stomachic oscillations by its swing, much would be accomplished toward alleviating sea-sickness. Swinging beds, have, however, their objections. To most people they are practically inaccessible.

The difficulties of seagoing have hitherto been found hard to overcome. Passengers cannot be packed like compasses or chronometers, or stowed like sailors in hammocks on board a man-of-war. Yet people like to observe things which they cannot visit without crossing the water; and others are compelled to face the terrible ordeal, whether they like it or not. Mr. Henry Bessemer, of England, famous for his steel-making process, thinks he has solved the problem. He has constructed the model of a vessel, in which the saloon for passengers is "suspended" amidships. In the model, which has twenty feet beam (or width) and corresponding length, the floor of the saloon has only a deviation from the horizontal of 1 or 1½ degrees, when the deck shows an inclination of from 28 degrees to 30.

It is hardly prudent to pronounce against any new invention or discovery in advance. Dr. Dionysius Lardner, some forty-five years ago, demonstrated the utter impossibility of ocean steam navigation, and the facts and figures and deductions of his paper were by many deemed unanswerable. So, though it is not safe to say that Mr. Bessemer cannot preserve in the saloon the calmness of a summer sea, while outside the waves are "mountains rolling," yet a few objections may be hinted.

First. The rolling and pitching of the model are created by "machinery" quite in the management of Mr. Bessemer. But the machinery which rolls the ship at sea will not be under the captain's control.

Second. The engines and machinery of a steamship, and, of course, the fuel, are usually placed amidships, or in the centre of the vessel. This disposition is made for several reasons. A ship "behaves best" when her heaviest weight is in the centre.

The saloon must be in the exact centre of the new ship, and the machinery be transferred to both ends. A revolution in ship framing must be made, or else with part of the weight forward and part aft the vessel will become what sailors call "broken-backed;" a condition against which the skill of the "stevedore" is always directed in stowing the cargo.

Third. With a ship heavy at both ends, and light in the centre, it is possible that an experience of "sea-vaulting" might be opened, unknown heretofore to the most "ancient mariner," and a "suspended saloon," dancing like an apple in a Christmas bowl, might aid in the confusion of things materially. All this is modestly put. Mr. Bessemer has found "promoters" who think well of his scheme, and plans are now drawing for ships with the projected improvement. If the experiment succeeds, Mr. Bessemer will deserve well of the whole world of travellers; and a new demonstration of "possibilities" will be given.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

STORMS ABROAD.—England has been visited with a heavy storm of wind, rain and snow. The latter fell to the depth of twelve inches, the water inundated large tracts of country, while the wind caused numerous casualties on the coast, attended with loss of life and property. These storms are common in Europe this season. The coast of the Baltic was recently visited by a terrible hurricane, which swept off more than a hundred souls, while the rise of the rivers in France and Italy caused immense damage to the adjoining country. These calamities have also created much suffering among the people, and means have been taken to supply their wants from public and private sources.

DEATH OF EDWIN FORREST.—Edwin Forrest, the great tragedian, died on the morning of December 12, at his house in Philadelphia, in the 67th year of his age. He was born in Philadelphia on the 9th of March, 1806, and made his first appearance on the regular stage at the Walnut Street Theatre, in his native city, at the age of 14. He leaves most of his large fortune for the founding of an institution for the support and maintenance of actors and actresses, decayed by age or disabled by infirmity; this institution to be called "The Edwin Forrest Home," and situated at his country seat, near the city of Philadelphia.

SENSIBLE DECISION.—The House Postal Committee have decided that under the law all the postage to be collected on a short-paid letter is the balance up to the full rate. This is a sensible decision, of great value to the business community.

☞ A Maryland man was arrested on suspicion of violating the code, the other day, just because he had about him two navy revolvers, three pocket-pistols, two billies, some brass knuckles, and a sword-cane.

☞ A Yorkshire, England, mother sold her child, about twelve months old, to a man for sixty cents. The man afterwards resold it for twelve cents. The child appears to be below "par"—and "mar," too.—*Norristown Herald.*

☞ A girl in Indianapolis, who has $200,000, advertises for sealed proposals of marriage. The postmaster has decided to charge her double price for her box, as it keeps one clerk half of his time filling it up with pink-tinted envelopes, and the whole office is scented with musk and bergamot, like a perfumer's shop.

☞ George Alfred Townsend says: "In Philadelphia they hang editors who say anything of a witty nature; and no editor has been executed for a hundred years." They also slay journalists who exhibit dense stupidity. That is the reason why Townsend lives elsewhere.

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A SCIENTIFIC QUESTION SETTLED.

It may interest some of our readers who are investigating the subject, to learn from a late scientific article that "vibrations produced by the same elastic source are isochronous through all variations of amplitude in the oscillations." We publish this intelligence with greater readiness because we know that many persons have entertained an opinion that the vibrations were *not* isochronous through all the variations of amplitude. If we shall succeed in rooting out this dangerous fallacy from the mind, and shall lead some poor, wandering soul, now groping in the Cimmerian gloom of error, up to happiness and peace and a truthful appreciation of the operation of isochronous vibrations of which are through all the variations amplitude in the oscillations, life will be brighter and happier to us, an aching void will be filled, hope will once more spring eternal in our breast, and we will feel as if even the most assiduous life-insurance agent could no longer make existence a burden if he should call twice a day for twelve years.

THE STORY OF MR. SNICKLES AND THE THACHER.

A gentleman from Swampville was telling how many different occupations he had attempted. Among others he had tried school-teaching.

"How long did you teach?" asked a by-stander.

"Wa'al, I didn't teach long—that is I only went to teach."

"Did you hire out?"

"Wa'al, I didn't hire out? I only went to hire out."

"Why did you give up?"

"Wa'al, I give it up for some reason or nuther. You see, I travelled into a desstrict and inquired for the trustees. Somebody said Mr. Snickles was the man I wanted to see. So I found Mr. Snickles, named my objic, interducing myself, and asked what he thought about lettin me try my luck with the big boys and unruly gals in the desstrict. He wanted to know if I really considered myself capable; and I told him I wouldn't mind his asking me a few easy questions in 'rithmetic and jography, or showing my handwriting. He said, no never mind, he could tell a good teacher by his gait. 'Let me see you walk off a little ways,' says he, 'and I can tell jis's well's I heard you examined,' says he. He sot in the door as he spoke, and I thought he looked a little skittish; but I was consid'rable frustrated, and didn't mind much; so I turned about and walked on as smart as I know'd how. He said he'd tell me when to stop, so I kep' on till I thought I'd gone far enough; then I s'pected nothing was to pay, and I looked round. Wa'al, the door was shet, and Snickles was gone!"

HENS VS. HOGS.

The quintessence of the omniverous hog is supposed to be imaged in the hen, but a hog is a Peabody among animals alongside of a hen. Hens are by nature monopolists. When the subject of victuals is mentioned they are evidently listening. Throw a handful of corn into a ten-acre lot, and every hen in the enclosure will get a dab at it. The last hen on the spot may not get more than two or three kernels, but nothing in the hen's appearance will indicate that. It will step around with as much precision and gratitude as any in the flock, and wear the most pensive smile you ever saw. A hen will not eat everything it sees, but will try to—and there isn't one on the face of this earth but that can tell you the taste of everything it has seen within the radius of half a mile of its house. It is only when a man has kicked at a hen and missed it, that he begins to understand how thoroughly hollow and deceitful this world is, and it, is a marvelous fact in this connection that he will miss the hen if he kicks at it, and misses it if he don't.

CAPTAIN JONES'S COMPANY.

The newly elected captain of a military company in Pennsylvania not long ago received the following invitation: "Mrs. Smith requests the pleasure of Captain Jones's company to a small party on Friday evening." To this the captain responded thus: "Captain Jones presents his compliments to Mrs. Smith, and regrets that seventeen privates are detained by *habeas corpus* writs, and two sergeants are on the sick-list with sore legs and billiousness. The rest of Captain Jones's company, consisting of sixteen men, two corporals and a drummer, will have much pleasure in waiting on Mrs. Smith on Friday evening."

SPICE.

That intelligent compositor turned up in our own office, the other day. We happened to introduce into an article the poetic inquiry, "Where are the dead, the vanished dead?" But he—wild and reckless butcher that he is—got it into type thus: "Where are the dead, the varnished dead?" This man must die. A miscreant that inserts observations about varnish into poetry which is intended to call up the tenderest and holiest associations, is unfit to live in a world which wants to be happy.

A Chicago paper says "a young lady of this city has just sent to Europe an order for fifty yards of Brussels carpet, twenty-five feet wide. She is going to work a pair of slippers for the editor of the St. Louis Globe."

Three shirt-buttons were found in the crop of a chicken, Thursday. We don't suppose the chicken swallowed those buttons merely because they were nourishing, but rather for recreation.

A prudent old Jersey farmer who visited New York last week purchased an Esquimaux Bible, because he could get it cheaper than an English book, and felt as though he wanted something of the kind in the house.

When you make a sidewalk you want to get it very narrow and very high—something like the shape of an egg. Then when any one slips on it, a leg will go off at each side, and he will be split through to the chin, and die without a struggle, and his wife can get the insurance and marry a man who will go into business and make an assignment. On any other walk a man will fall and cripple himself, and live on for years after his wife is dead, and then die and leave the insurance money to his mother.

A few days ago the inhabitants of a country town in England were filled with conjecture at the following sign, painted in large capitals on the front of a house recently fitted up and repaired:—"Mrs. Brown, dealer in all sorts of ladies." All was consternation. Inquiry was instantly set on foot as to who this Mrs Brown might be, but no one could tell. She was a stranger in the town. The second week after the mystery was unravelled. The house painter returned to finish his work, and concluded by adding, "and gentlemen's wearing apparel."

A process has been patented in England for "completely removing the hair from a hide or skin and transferring it, exactly as it left the hide or skin, to a piece of muslin other substance. Smythe says the pro-tion is not altogether new. When he ts hair removed from the skin, all he has is to contradict his wife. But instead nsferring it to muslin, she pitches the stove, he says.

untry lyceum in Illinois has decided estion whether murderers ought to be , in the affirmative. That settles it. score or more of murderers await-trial in New York will now doubtless be swung off rapidly, as the authorities were evidently awaiting the decision of this lyceum.

THE CHAIN.

The bond that links our souls together,
Will it last through stormy weather?
Will it moulder and decay
As the long hours fleet away?
Will it stretch when time divides us?
If it look too poor and slight,
Let us break the links to-night.

It was not forged by mortal hands,
Or clasped with golden bars and bands;
Save thine and mine, no other eyes
The slender links can recognize:
In the bright light it seems to fade—
And it is hidden in the shade;
While Heaven or earth have never heard,
Or solemn vow, or plighted word.

Yet what no mortal hand could make,
No mortal power can ever break;
What words or vows could never do,
No words or vows can make untrue:
And if to other hearts unknown
The dearer and the more our own,
Because too sacred and divine
For other eyes save thine and mine.

And see, though slender, it is made
Of Love and Trust, and can they fade?
While, if too slight it seems to bear
The breathing of the summer air,
We know that it could bear the weight
Of a most heavy heart of late,
And as each day and hour has flown,
Stronger for its great burden grown.

And, too, we know and feel again
It has been sanctified by pain;
For what God deigns to try with sorrow
He means not to decay to-morrow;
But through that fiery trial at last
When earthly bonds and ties are past,
What slighter things dare not endure,
Will make our love more safe and pure.

Love shall be purified by pain,
And Pain be soothed by Love again;
So let us now take heart and go
Cheerfully on, through joy and woe:
No joy the summer sun can bring,
Or even the changeful skies of Spring,
Or the bleak Winter's stormy weather,
Till we shall meet them, Love, together!

MAB'S PROMISE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARGARET DOUGLASS.

"Do you really love him so much?" questioned little Mabel Lee, looking somewhat wonderingly at her friend, Hester Grey.

"Better than my life," was the passionate response.

Then both sat silently looking out upon the bright garden stretched beneath the window. Hester with her calm, almost stern face glowing and softened; and Mabel, or little Mab, as people called her, with arched eyebrows and a rather surprised expression in her large black eyes.

"I always thought that if you fell—no that's not the word for you—if you bestowed your heart on any mortal, it would be on some great scholar, and not upon a mere everyday man!" said Mab teasingly.

"But he is not an 'everyday man!' Oh, Mab, if you could only know him."

"I shall shortly. Papa met him yesterday at Montmouth, and asked him to dine here next week," was Mab's composed reply.

The color rushed into Hester's cheeks, and affecting to fasten her belt she bent her head and said timidly, "Mab, if I should lose him; if—if he should ever cease caring for me, I could not—" She stopped and then continued more quietly. "He is handsome and rich, while I am plain and only a music teacher. I do not know how he came to care for me, but he does, and oh, Mab I am so happy!" Her voice trembled and her hands covered her flushed face.

Mab's rather skeptical expression vanished from her face, and rising from her low seat, she slipped her arm around her friend, and nestling by her side in one of the pretty attitudes that came naturally to her, she gave all her warm heart utterance.

The dressing bell broke upon their conference, and cut short an interesting and what threatened to prove an interminable conversation, for we question if two young ladies ever voluntarily closed a discussion of this kind.

"Handsome and rich," mused Mab as she stood before her mirror putting the finishing touches to her dinner toilette.

"Would it be worth while to win him, I wonder?" and at the thought her red lips parted and displayed teeth as white as seed pearls; then they closed determinedly, and the next thought that entered the volatile little head was—"Perhaps I do flirt, but I'd never be dishonorable enough to try to gain Hester's lover, even if I loved him myself, the most unlikely thing that could happen. No. I'd never do that!"

And with a laughing nod at the pretty face reflected in the glass the little lady tripped down-stairs to be introduced to Stanhope Morton, "Hester's lover."

"He is a handsome man and *rather*, not desperately, in love with Hester," was Mab's verdict.

In love or not, he certainly devoted himself to Miss Grey, and Mab was left to entertain Harry Evans, one of her numerous admirers; between the words and looks she gave her admirer, she was covertly watching the twain upon the piazza, and thinking to herself, "It was well I had decided to 'angle for other fish' for he has not even a look to cast upon *me*," and here the spoiled beauty tossed her curly head, and for the time was desperately angry with Mr. Morton; however, she recovered in time to reply sweetly to an exceedingly soft remark hazarded by her youthful admirer, and in the meanwhile her promise came back to her mind.

Three weeks passed merrily, and Mab, true to her word, had resisted all temptation to win Hester's handsome cavalier.

As for Morton, he was in the society of the woman he loved, and for a time noticed no one else. Perhaps, as Mab shrewdly guessed the first day, he was not hopelessly smitten; he pitied the girl's hard lot, and the bond of union between them was music, in which art Hester excelled. He loved her certainly, though not desperately, had proposed, and was accepted.

After awhile he began to notice that while Mab scattered her smiles promiscuously, he never received one. This surprised, then piqued, and finally interested him, and he determined to discover the cause; to this end he began to seize every chance to draw her into conversation, but with little success, for all his overtures of friendship were decidedly rebuffed. Poor Hester lamented that the two she loved best should not be friends, and encouraged him to walk and talk with Mab, or rather attempt it, for to the gentleman's great disgust she would leave him as soon as possible to flirt with perhaps some insipid cadet.

But by and by he found that the girl would listen to him, and anxious to gain her good opinion he exerted himself, and with such good effect that his words and tones would ring in her ears long after they had been spoken.

One evening he surprised her seated alone on the piazza step; she started when he drew near, and he thought that he could see the glimmer of tears beneath the silken lashes that so carefully veiled her eyes. He opened the conversation by some commonplace remark, and then said abruptly:

"Miss Mab, why did you avoid me so carefully when we first met?"

Her head was turned from him, and her fingers plucked nervously at a scarlet rose she held, but she made no reply.

"Why was it? Do you dislike me, Miss Lee?" he repeated, earnestly, and he was himself surprised at the anxiety with which he awaited an answer.

Her head turned slowly toward him, and for a second her eyes met his as she said, "Dislike you?"

Something in her words and look startled him, and rising quietly he faced her, for she had again turned from him, saying rapidly, "Then you did not? You do—"

She rose also, and the red petals of the flower she had savagely torn to pieces floated to the ground, where they lay in the glow of the setting sun like drops of blood.

"I did not contradict your assertion, sir. If I do dislike you I see no reason why we should discuss the point," she returned, icily, and then passed into the house.

Stanhope looked after her admiringly, and it seemed as though he had realized for the first time how beautiful she was. Again and again her look and tone rose to his mind, and with the remembrance was interwoven a dim, vague hope.

The poor child reached her room at last, how, she never knew, for in spite of her calm tone, her very brain seemed reeling, and there bowing her head she groaned, "I did not mean—oh, my promise—my promise!"

From this time Stanhope almost unconsciously began to absent himself from Hester's company to seek that of Mab, whose conduct at this time was to him a perfect riddle.

Hester encouraged him, for her faith in him was so perfect that never for a moment did she suspect him of a breach of trust; and Mab, seeing this repeated night and day, said to herself, "I will keep my promise."

A month after their first meeting, Stanhope was her escort on a water-party. Hester, having a headache, declined going, but pressed Mab to accept Mr. Morton's attendance, and the girl, against her better judgment, agreed to go.

During the day he was very silent, but not so Mab. If she had never been called "flirt" before, her deeds this day would have won her the title. But laugh and dance as she would, she was painfully conscious that a pale, stern face was watching her, and that a pair of black eyes kept guard over her.

As evening came on the yacht was turned homeward, and the party grouped themselves in different parts of the vessel. Mab slipped away unperceived, as she thought, and seated herself where she could not be seen by the merry groups.

Presently a shadow fell across the deck at her feet, and looking up, she saw Stanhope Morton.

Without speaking, he seated himself on a coil of rope at her side in such a way that he could see her face. Mab's heart was beating furiously, and her color deepened beneath his look.

Presently he said, "Miss Mabel, why is it that you never give me a kind word or look? I have asked you if you dislike me—if I have offended you, and you always evade an answer."

The hands lying in her lap tightened upon each other but she answered bravely, "Dislike you? No, but you are an engaged man, and that prohibits my flirting with you!"

"Then you acknowledge that you flirt, you wonder among women?" he said lightly.

"Certainly. Surely some of my numerous friends must have told you I am guilty of that crime? The first thing which a gentleman hears on arriving at D—— is my dangerous proclivity. I don't remember whether I flirted before they called me a flirt, or whether I was driven to it in desperation, and urged on by a wish to earn the name given me. It's too much trouble to investigate." She spoke rapidly, hardly knowing what she said, but determined to keep clear of dangerous subjects, for she began to doubt herself. Not giving him time to reply, she continued, "I am so sorry that Hester could not come with us."

His face darkened and he said abruptly, "Miss Lee, why do you drag Hester's name into all our conversations? No, you cannot go just yet. You *must* hear me. You must see how I love you, how long and how truly." He had taken her hand, and for a second she let it rest in his, while her heart almost ceased to beat at the thought of the choice which lay before her. Then she withdrew it, saying almost aloud in her agony, "My promise—my promise."

She tried to speak, but he stopped her, saying brokenly, "You think I am wrong in saying such words to you; but oh! Mabel, when I met Hester I felt pity for her, but I never loved until I knew *you*. Do you not think it would be wrong to marry one woman while you loved another?"

He waited eagerly for an answer.

There was a pause, and Mab, gathering her strength, said steadily, "You *are* very wrong, and your words, coming from an engaged man, are insults. If you pitied Hester at first, you should pity her still more now, that you have taught her to love you only that you might desert her."

Stanhope winced under her speech, and little guessed how the poor little heart ached at the pain she was inflicting on him.

His face was ghastly pale as he said, "You are right, Miss Lee. I ask your pardon for what I have said, I——" his voice failed and he turned away. Then he returned and taking her hand, said hurriedly, "Forgive me Mabel, I will do what is right, and though you cannot love me, you have done me the greatest kindness, reminded me of my duty. God bless you, my only love." He walked away rapidly, and Mab stood where he had left her, living a lifetime in half an hour.

On reaching home she found a telegram calling her to Boston to the death-bed of an aunt. Snatching at anything that would take her away from Stanhope, she hastily made her arrangements to leave, and in an hour was seated in a railway car.

The next news she received of Hester was her marriage to Stanhope, and who can blame her if the brave little heart gave way for once, and if tears flowed in memory of a dead love. Poor little Mab! Flirt and coquette they had called her, but she had earned the hardest lesson a woman can ever earn—to place duty before love.

She and Stanhope had never met since that night, and she so steadily refused all Hester's entreaties to visit, that by and by, in the new ties and cares incident to her changed life, Hester almost forgot her friend or remembered her only as one remembers a pleasant dream—a bright, pleasant thing, which one can't bring back. She was very happy, for her husband was kind and indulgent, though, perhaps, not affectionate; but she never missed it, and never dreamed how much she owed her happiness to Mab Lee.

And Stanhope? Well, he had wife, children, and a comfortable home, and would you wonder if he forgot the girl he had once loved? Perhaps it was so, and he looked back upon his love for her as he looked back upon his youth, glorious, soul-entrancing at the time, but what comparison with the placid undisturbed course of middle-age. Or, perhaps——

And Mab?

After the sacrifice was made and the great struggle over, she took up her life again, but, to every one's surprise, never married.

The poor and unfortunate could bear witness that she lived, but no one ever guessed how much good her hand had done.

Every one saw that the girl had become greatly changed, and those who had been severest in their strictures upon the motherless girl who erred, if she *had* erred, more from thoughtlessness than anything else, now declared, as they saw how tenderly she cared for her father, that they "had known all along there was good in her."

Quietly and unobtrusively she went her way through the world until her father was laid in his coffin; and after that she began to sink. She had no disease, but her work on earth was ended, and one Summer afternoon, when the world was all aglow in the full *perfection of the season*, she lay dying.

The pale, transparent face looks scarcely older than when we first saw her a bright girl of eighteen, more than ten years ago.

The long-fringed eyelids rest on the wan cheek, and the room is quiet save for her irregular breathing and the ticking of the doctor's watch.

The end has almost come.

Presently she starts up crying out, "It cannot be. Please—please. It must not. Oh! Hester—I have kept my promise!" She is living over again on her death bed the bitterest hour of her life.

Then she sinks back, and the pale lips smile as she repeats faintly, "I loved—him, but he—never knew it—Hester—I kept my promise."

Two or three long quivering breaths, and then leal, true-hearted little Mab was at rest.

RATHER TOO SOCIABLE.

MISTRESS.—"I did not ring, Mary."

MARY.—"I know that, mum; but as I was moping in the kitchen, I thought I'd come and sit a bit with you!"

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double rates* on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

DELTA, (Minden, La.,) writes: "Hoping that you will answer a few questions for me I will ask them as follows: 1st. Please tell me how buried cities, rivers, and lakes are formed? 2d. Where and at what price, could I obtain a full list of books for instruction in Stenography? 3d. What was the name of the Pope who kicked the crown off the head of Henry IV, of England?" We do not know of any buried lakes. Buried rivers are such as run under ground for a part or the whole of their course, through some natural channel under the surface. Cities are buried by various causes. Sometimes by sinking of the earth, sometimes by gradual accumulation of the soil, sometimes by volcanic eruptions, as at Pompeii and Herculaneum. 2d. You had better inquire of some bookseller. Works on Stenography are not much called for now, the more modern Phonographic system taking their place. 3d. You must refer to Henry IV. of Germany. There is no history to show that the Pope kicked his crown off. But he was forced to stand three days, of a severe winter, barefooted and fasting, in the court-yard of the castle, before his spiritual master would admit him to an audience. The Pope in question was Gregory VII.

C. J., (Boswell, O.,) writes: "Please tell me what the Congressional Globe will cost me—and how it is issued, weekly, monthly, or by the session; and who shall I address at Washington to get it or information about it. I do not care to have you criticise my handwriting, I believe." We are glad you don't. You cannot imagine what a slashing criticism you have escaped. The paper mentioned is a daily. For full information about it, address "Publishers of Congressional Globe, Washington, D. C."

GAHMEW asks: "Is the Presidential office limited to two terms by law, or is it only a custom? I say the latter. We have a dispute on this subject." There is no Constitutional limitation. A President sufficiently popular might be elected to an indefinite number of terms.

UNWORTHY (Ripley, Miss.,) writes: "Having been a reader of your valuable columns for a number of years, I take the liberty to ask your advice upon a subject which has troubled me no little. When quite a youth I became enamoured of a young girl about my own age, and it seemed to be generally understood, both in my family and in hers, that as soon as we arrived at a marriageable age we should marry. But the war came along and slightly broke into our arrangements. I don't remember to have ever told her of my love in my boyhood, at least I never did by words, but think I made it plain enough by actions. I was always a timid boy, and found it quite a task to muster up courage enough to tell her of my love. So I thought one night when I expected to be in her company, I would take some stimulus in order to get up spirit enough to enable me to pop the question. But instead of getting up spirits, spirits got up me, and pretty high too, for I became so tipsy that I made a complete fool of myself, and spoiled everything. I think I made a little headway, however, as she intimated that she would give me an answer on a certain day of the following week. But when the time arrived, I was so ashamed of my conduct that I concluded not to go. I visited her again after the lapse of a few weeks, and when I mentioned the subject she coldly informed me that she had not thought of it since. She did not even give me time to explain, and what could a fellow do but 'take up his bed and walk.' I felt that I had lost my best friend in the world, and notwithstanding the fact that I was never addicted to the habit of drinking, the fact alone that I was deserted by the only woman I ever loved came near causing me to become a hopeless drunkard. I knew that I deserved the censure of the community; but considering that it was my first offence, I don't think the young lady should have been so hard upon me. I am still unmarried, and so is my lady love, and I sometimes imagine that she thinks well of me, and am tempted to mention the subject of matrimony to her. But I have good reasons to believe that she is engaged, and am afraid of meeting with another defeat. Under the circumstances, what would you advise me to do? What do you think of my handwriting?" We think a question about your handwriting a very lame ending to so pitiable a story. It is very good of the kind, but after reading your love troubles, we are sorry to find that you seem almost equally troubled about your penmanship. As for the young lady's rejecting you, she certainly showed her good sense in doing so. You could not have insulted her more deeply than by declaring your love in a state of intoxication. As to its being your first offence, how was she to know that? Her natural conclusion would be that it was an old habit with you, which you had till then concealed from her; and any lady is perfectly justified in refusing to marry a drunkard. However, if you have reformed, and she knows it, there is no special reason why you should not repeat your declaration. If you do not positively know of her engagement, there is no hindrance to your entering the lists. A no will only leave you where you are now, and it may possibly be a yes.

T. C. W., (Academy, W. Va.), writes: "I would like you to answer the following question. I am a carpenter, and want a good paper that is adapted to my trade. Please name in your next issue where I can send for such a paper." We do not know of any paper specially adapted to your wants. The Scientific American or American Artisan comes nearest to what you need, but we fear you would find neither of them closely adapted to your purposes. They are devoted to general mechanical information, touching all trades.

I. W. C., (Holyoke, Mass.,) writes: "There is a question or two I would like to ask through your columns. It is this. A lady acquaintance has an only son, and he is now in the United States Navy. She feels very anxious about him, and wishes to know what paper is published that has information of the movements of war vessels. The vessel he is on is the Tuscarora. If you can inform me where I can get the paper I wish, I shall be very grateful." Why not address a letter to the Navy Department at Washington, requesting information as to the present location and prospective movements of the Tuscarora, or where such information can be found? Tell your object in questioning, and there is little doubt but that you will get a satisfactory answer. There used to be an Army and Navy Gazette, which would tell what you wish probably.

W. H. L., (Canton, Mo.,) writes: "I have long wished to ask you a few questions, but was afraid to on account of exposing my ignorance. But I have at length mustered up courage to do it anyhow. 1st. Why is it that the two constellations, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, revolve round the Pole star, instead of having the same apparent motion as the rest of the heavenly bodies? 2d. Why is the motion of one contrary or opposite to that of the other? 3d. Is the Polar star the most fixed, or only apparently so, of all the stars? 4th. Does it sustain a peculiar relationship to the two constellations above named? 5th. Was the Liverpool and Manchester Railroad in England the first that was used for the conveyance of passengers? If not which one was? 6th. How old is the city of London, and by whom was it founded? 7th. When and where, and for what cause, did the first schism or division occur in the Christian Church? 8th. Has the Patriarch of Constantinople the same power and authority in the Greek Church as the Bishop of Rome has in the Roman Church? 9th. Does the Greek Church constitute the whole of what is called the Eastern Church?" 1st. They have the same apparent motion as the other stars, though their nearness to the Pole affects this appearance in a peculiar way. The apparent motion of the stars is round the axis of the earth, and is caused by the real revolution of the earth round its axis. The axis, carried into the celestial regions, passes through the Polar star. This star appears elevated in the heavens to us from the fact that we stand on the northern curve of the earth's surface. In the region near the Polar star then we see both above and below the line of the earth's axis, and constellations in this neighborhood are visible in their whole revolution round the axis. Those farther removed are hidden by the earth in a portion of their revolution. 2d. The apparent contrary motion is because one is below while the other is above the axis. Their revolution is in the same direction. 3d. Only apparently so. 4th. Yes. It forms a portion of Ursa Minor, occupying the end of the little bear's tail, on which this stellar animal swings in his perpetual round. 5th, No. The Stockton and Darlington railroad was the first. Its charter was granted by Parliament in 1821. 6th. It was one of the chief stations of the Romans during their occupation of England. It was called variously Londinium, Londinium, and Augusta. There was probably a village there previously. 7th. The first important division of opinion was that known as the Gnostic Heresy, in the 1st century after Christ. The first sect to advance its doctrines as the true doctrine of the church, and to endeavor to support it by appeal to antiquity, was the Arian, first preached by Arius about 318 A. D. 8th. No. He has no control at present over the church in Russia or in Greece, and his authority in Turkey is limited by the Turkish government. 9th. Yes.

H. A. asks: "I am an heir of Anneke Jans, and one of the lawful heirs of Trinity Church estate. What is my prospect of ever getting anything, and how long do you think it will be before it is all settled up?" It will probably be as long as the celebrated chancery suit in Dickens's Bleak House, "Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce," and be settled when the lawyers have most of the property. We would advise you to place no dependance on it, as it may far outlast your lifetime.

AN OLD READER writes: "I am at a loss as to the most economical mode of managing coal grates, so as to secure the most heat, with the least injury to health from gas. As your Poet is, par excellence, the family paper, be so kind as to give me a word of advice which may help such families as desire to have the benefit of a good, hot fire in cold weather. One family burns much coal, but keep the stove shut up tight, all lids down, giving a dark, cheerless look, while much of the heat they shut off must, of course, pass up the pipe, and is so much lost. This wasteful mode is occasioned by a dread of gas, which is said to escape into the room. But remove the lids, and you have a bright, glowing fire; while a paper thrown in, to burn on the surface, indicates from its dance the passage of gas, *not out*, but in, the flame going up the chimney with the gas. At the Franklin Institute I have for many a past Winter been delighted with the janitor's open-grate fire, and once remarked that it was worth walking a mile out of the way for the sake of sitting before that bright, cheerful fire, which sent out so much intense heat, and without any complaint about gas. Stepping into the room of an artist, I found him busy over his engraving, sitting beside an open-top cylinder stove, with the lid off. 'What, suicide by gas?' 'Nonsense,' said the artist. 'Do you not see the red glow of the coals? No apprehension from gas after the coal is sufficiently ignited.' Now, Mr. Editor, how is this? How about that gas nuisance, which closes up the stove, sending its heat up the pipe? And how about the open grate or stove, sending out into the room its bright glow and comfortable heat? Pray, friend Poet, enlighten me." It has not been our experience to find people so nervous about gas as usually to sit with closed stoves, except the coldness of the room required it. If the draft is sufficiently good, the gas will pass up the chimney rather than into the room. If the draft in the chimney is poor, it may partly be thrown into the room. Your friend, the artist, is right. When coal is put on a hot fire, the effect is to drive out a great quantity of gas, which may be seen partly burning above the fire. It is best, then, to close the stove for awhile, so as to make the draft greater and carry off this gas. But when the coal is fully ignited the gas is wholly, or in great part, burned, and a draft sufficient to cause intense ignition will carry off into the chimney all the gas not burned, even with the door open. With the stove door open, the effect of the draft is to draw the air in above the fire. In consequence, little air passes through the fire, which languishes, from lack of oxygen. It is thus necessary to shut the door to produce a brisk ignition of the coal. We agree with you in enjoyment of the cheerful light of an open-grate fire, but cannot say that we altogether admire its heating effect in very cold weather. Its heat is more of the radiant character, so that the face may be scorching while the back is cold. In moderate weather it is a great institution.

IGNORANCE, (Trenton, N. J.,) writes: "I wish to trouble you with a few questions, which I hope you will be kind enough to answer. 1st. Can you tell me how I shall direct to ——. 2d. I should like to know who is the proper person to cut a wedding cake? 3d. Who should the first piece be given to? 4th. When a wedding takes place at the minister's house in the morning, should the cake be eaten for dinner, and should it be eaten first, before meat? 5th. Should you send cake to persons not invited to the wedding?" 1st. Direct to Germantown, Penna. 2d. It is not material. In England it is the custom for the gentleman nearest the cake to cut and pass it round, before toasts are drunk. In many cases here, the bride cuts the first piece, after her a groomsman. 3d. We know of no set rule on the subject. It is not considered a very important matter. 4th. It is often cut at dinner, and should be eaten after the substantials. Cake before meat would hardly be desirable. 5th. It is often advisable, except in special cases.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RECEIPTS.

BLACK CAKE.—Commence the day previous to baking to prepare the fruit and spices. Wash the butter from most of the salt, and press out the water by wringing it in a cloth; seed the raisins; wash, dry, and pick over four or five pounds of raisins. Weigh one pound of flour, and brown it, stirring constantly; dry brown sugar, and roll it until it is as fine as flour; seed three pounds of raisins, and chop them, cut in thin, small slices one pound of citron; grate half a nutmeg; grind and sift a dessertspoonful of cinnamon, one teaspoon of mace, three-fourths of a teaspoon of cloves. The next day weigh one pound of the dried brown sugar, three-fourths of a pound of butter; and work them together until light; add a tablespoonful of molasses and the spices. Dissolve a teaspoon of soda in a wine-glass of milk; strain it, and mix it with a wine-glass of wine, and one of brandy, and stir it in the cake. Have 1 eat ten eggs as light as possible; stir in the yolks, and beat well; and then the whites, and beat thoroughly; then add gradually the browned flour. The pans should be buttered, and lined with buttered paper; stir in first the citron, then the raisins chopped, and lastly three pounds of currants weighed when dry; stir a few moments to mix well, and bake immediately in a moderate oven; cover the top with paper; bake steadily, if in thick loaves, from two to two and a half hours. It should not be cut under two weeks, and it would be better left until four. Frost before cutting. The frosting becomes discolored by standing. This cake if frosted while warm, will keep for a year. It should be kept shut in a tin box. As soon as cold roll it in thick linen cloth, and pack it away. For weddings it is considered indispensable, and is generally baked in a milk-pan, it will then take three hours steady baking. It tastes better to dry flour without browning.

CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING.—One pound each of raisins, currants, beef suet and flour, eight eggs, one-fourth of a pound of candied citron or lemon peel, one teaspoonful of ground mixed spice, one small teaspoonful of salt; mix all together to the consistency of cake, if necessary add a little milk; tie it up in a strong cloth, leaving a little room to swell, and boil eight hours or more. When taken up it should be dipped in cold water to prevent it sticking to the cloth. When dished up the last thing pour on a glass of brandy and set it on fire. If it is set on fire too soon it will burn out before it reaches the dinner table. Make a sauce as is usual of water, flour, butter and sugar. Another sauce is made of half a tumbler of water, the yolks of three eggs, half a bottle of claret wine and sweetened to taste; beat the water and the yolks of the eggs together, and then add the rest and boil, stirring till it boils.

SOFT MUFFINS.—Warm a quart of milk, and melt in it a quarter of a pound of the best fresh butter cut into bits. When melted, stir it about and set it away to cool. Boil four eggs till very thick and light, and stir them gradually into a pan of milk and butter when it is quite cold. Then by degrees stir in enough of sifted flour to make a batter as thick as you can well beat it. Then at the last stir in three tablespoonfuls of baker's or brewer's yeast. Cover the pan of batter with a double cloth, and set it on the hearth (or some other warm place) to rise, but it must not be allowed to get hot. It should have risen nearly to the top of the pan, and be covered with bubbles in about three hours. The griddle being heated, grease it with nice butter tied in a rag; take a ladleful of butter out of the pan, pour it into the ring, and bake the muffins. Send them hot to table, and split and butter them. These are superior to all muffins. Those who have eaten them will never desire any others if this receipt has been faithfully followed. Try it.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 21 letters.
My 1, 3, 4, is a gift.
My 18, 19, 20, 21, 14, 15, is a metallic frame to prevent coals of fire from falling forward on to the floor.
My 6, 7, 8, 10, is a German name.
My 10, 7, 8, 9, is fine earth.
My 12, 13, 7, is a lady's name.
My 12, 21, 3, 4, 6, is a lady's name.
My 7, 21, 7, is a lady's name.
My 15, 3, 13, 14, 15, is a water-course.
My 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, is to part.
My 4, 5, 7, is a plant.
My 4, 16, 11, is a weight.
My 19, 20, 21, is last of all.
My 2, 3, 4, is to strike.
My whole is a beautiful sentiment.

N. C. D.

ANAGRAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

1. Coil Snuff Club.
2. Poke at.
3. Lion, aid Spain.
4. No more.
5. To chance this.
6. E. H. Neal

7. Francis Sanoo.
8. Dull hut.
9. Stall for sayl.
10. Is a vial.
11. Tho' ice chil.
12. Fan's tea.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

BURIED STATES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. Miss Williams receives a paper from Denver, monthly.
2. General Harrison defeated the Indian army.
3. Whenever the scholars act amiss, our instructors reproofs are very severe.
4. King Numa in every respect was a lover of peace.
5. We receive the mail from Geneva daily.
6. Cornelius Scipio was a Roman consul, distinguished for his bravery.
7. David was not either large or giant-like, yet he slew a great giant.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

A sea.
A city.
A river.
An island.

II.

A conveyancer.
A musical instrument.
A lake.
The ocean.

III.

An island.
An ancient poet.
A river.
A city.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

HIDDEN BIRDS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. Charles, nip every one, don't leave any on the bush.
2. I would like to know how Lemuel found out.
3. Yes, this will do very well, thank you.
4. I saw her on Monday last.
5. He will have help; Eli cannot do it alone.

F. F. J.

PROBLEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

There is a triangular meadow 100 rods in length upon each side; I wish to fasten a horse by a rope to a post at one corner; required the length of rope necessary to enable the horse to graze over just one-half the area of the meadow?

W. H. MORROW,

Manor Station, Pa.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

ENIGMA—

"I had not loved thee, dear so well,
Loved I not honor more."

ANAGRAMS.—1. New Orleans. 2. La Crosse. 3. Sacramento. 4. Humboldt. 5. Vermillion. 6. Bayfield. 7. Washington. 8. West Point. 9. Des Moines. 10. Vancouver. 11. Eau Claire. 12. Sioux city.

WORD SQUARES—

I.	II.	III.
SOLVE	CLAM	KRAW
ORION	LYRE	ROSE
LIMIT	ARMS	ASIA
VOICE	MESH	WEAR
ENTER		

CHARADE—Fare-well.

PROBLEM—83⅓ and 116⅔ lbs.